



OUR LAND OF PROMISE:
A RUN THROUGH THE
CANADIAN NORTH-WEST

BY

917.12

COUNT DE BOUTHILLIER-CHAVIGNY.

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PREFACE.

Thanks to a wise and far-seeing policy, Canada has for twenty-five years been advancing with giant strides in the path of progress.

To realize the nature and extent of the progress and to appreciate the prodigious economic development of the Dominion, one has only to take his valise and to set out for the Canadian North-West. It was my good fortune to take this trip and it has been for me a veritable revelation. On my route from Montreal to the Rocky Mountains I learned everywhere what the will can accomplish when it is guided by practical intelligence and a lofty sense of patriotism.

In Manitoba, all through the Territories, and in that wonderful British Columbia, of which by-and-by I will have occasion to speak at some length, I ascertained what grand results this patriotism had brought to pass. The work to which these results are due is life-giving in its energies; to-day it is the honor, to-morrow it will be the safeguard, of those young countries.

In the course of my journey—which was far too rapid for my taste—I collected certain data and experienced certain impressions, in the publication of which I believe that I am discharging a duty. In my judgment, every

traveller, however modest he may be, has a mission to instruct those who cannot follow in his steps. In acquitting himself of this task, he not only renders a service to his neighbor, but he also pays a debt of gratitude to the country which yielded him so much pleasure.

For my own part, therefore, I publish these notes without the least hesitation. It is my assured conviction that of all the regions of the world, there is not one at this moment that offers to private initiative so fruitful a field of activity as the Canadian North-West. In that Land of Promise the hope of success never betrays the patient and industrious settler. *

I present the reading public with my observations and collections just as they were jotted down, as circumstances and chance encounters with colonists suggested them. I claim for them but one merit—that of sincerity; and I cordially hope that the perusal of them may lead to a just appreciation of the grand young country for which Providence has prepared destinies second to none on the American Continent.

DE BOUTHILLIER-CHAVIGNY.

(*)		In 1868 the total amount of Imports and			
1	{	Exports was		-	\$ 131,027,532
		In 1880	do	do	174,401,205
		In 1892	do	do	241,369,443
2	{	In 1868 the total value of Exports of Can-		-	\$ 48,504,899
		adian produce was		do	72,890,697
		In 1880	do	do	99,338,913
		In 1892	do	do	

3	The Interprovincial Trade is estimated at \$ 90,000,000			
4	{	In 1868 there was in operation in Canada, miles of railway - - -		2,258
		In 1875 do do		4,826
		In 1892 do do		14,588
5	{	In 1875 the railways transported, passeng's		5,190,416
		do do tons freight		6,670,836
		In 1892 do passengers		13,533,414
		do do tons freight		22,189,923
6	{	In 1875 the proportion of expenses to receipts was - - -		81 %
		In 1892 do do		70 "
7	{	The mercantile marine of Canada is the FIFTH in the world.		
	{	In 1868 the deposits in the Chartered Banks of Canada amounted to		\$ 32,808,103
		In 1880 do do		84,818,804
		In 1890 do do		136,187,515
8		In 1891 do do		149,431,573
		In 1892 do do		171,157,053
		The increase in 1891 over 1890 has been		13,244,058
		do 1892 1891 do		21,725,480
		This will give a total increase in 2 years of		34,969,538
9	{	In 1892 the total amount of deposits in the Chartered Banks, Post Office and Government Savings Banks, Montreal and Quebec Savings Banks and in the hands of loan companies was		\$241,498,900
		The increase over 1891 being		23,698,160
10		In 1892 the amount deposited in Postal Savings Banks only, was		\$22,298,401

These figures require no comments.

EN ROUTE FOR MANITOBA.

Some eight years ago the tourist who desired to reach the North-West of Canada had his choice of two routes. He might, passing through Toronto, the capital of Ontario, get on board at Owen Sound, Georgian Bay, of one of those splendid clippers of the Canadian Pacific Company, and after crossing the broad expanses of Lakes Huron and Superior, disembark at Port Arthur, a little Canadian town on the western shore of the latter lake, where he would find awaiting him the cars of the trans-continental line. Or, again, he might make his way by the American railways to Saint Paul, the capital of Minnesota, and from there betake himself to Winnipeg, the chief town of the Province of Manitoba. But the lake route was closed all winter, so that the United States route could alone be depended on all the year round. The commercial relations between the east and the west of the Dominion were thus at the mercy of our neighbors' good-will.

Since 1885, however, the Canadians have been masters of their own domain. They can freely traverse their magnificent country from one end to the other without passing through a foreign custom-house. The Parisian who starts for Marseilles flatters himself that he is undertaking a great journey. Sometimes he makes his will

before leaving home, and in any case takes precautions which would cause a smile on this side of the Atlantic. The distance from Paris to Marseilles is only 800 kilometres, while from Montreal to Vancouver, on the Pacific Ocean, by the north of the Great Lakes, it is 2,906 miles! Yet in Canada no one thinks it out of the way to undertake so long a journey. It is true that modern invention has so marvellously perfected the means of locomotion in the New World that six days of railway travel are more endurable than a few hours spent in the cramped boxes of Europe.

Most people have read an account of those superb sleeping cars which penetrate to all parts of the American Continent. In their luxurious apartments the traveller, for a sum comparatively trifling, may live as comfortably as in a first-class hotel. He has at his disposal a buffet well supplied, a good library, a smoking room, and even a bath-room.

Nor are the immigrants less carefully provided for. The wagons set apart for them by the Company are really sleeping cars without their luxurious accessories. The dimensions and arrangements are the same. On both sides of the central aisle are placed movable seats which, joined in pairs, form excellent beds for the future colonists to dream of the fortunes in quest of which they have come so far. At the two extremities and in compartments perfectly isolated two enormous stoves are permanently installed. One serves to heat the wagons in winter; the other, always lighted, is placed gratuitously at the disposal of the immigrants for the cooking

of their meals. The smokers also have their special den. And if it be added that to each of these wagons are attached special employees, as well as interpreters, all charged with the duty, according to their respective spheres, of watching over the well-being of the passengers, it will be easy to understand that everything in the arrangements is adapted to give the new-comer a favorable impression of his as yet unknown destination.

On the day of my departure the rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew in vehement gusts. I consoled myself for this contretemps by remembering that in four days I could have my lungs full of the life-giving air of the great western plains.

We are ere long approaching Ottawa, the federal capital of the Dominion. The moon has risen. In the light of her rays we perceive, perched on its promontory, which commands the grand Ottawa Valley, the sleeping city. The sombre mass of the Parliament buildings stands boldly out on the background of a sky spangled with countless stars. We remain a few minutes and then with full steam pursue our nightly course. Carleton, Almonte, Renfrew, Pembroke, which we pass during the night, are described in my guide-book as important industrial centres. Yesterday they were but humble villages. They owe not a little to their situation on the banks of the Ottawa or its affluents, and are thus in the commercial artery of that Grand North, which will one day rival the older portion of the Province of Quebec. The region which bears this name has an area of more

than a hundred thousand square miles extending from the Saguenay to the Ottawa, while its northern limits touch the wooded solitudes that stretch towards Hudson's Bay. Mighty rivers, the St. Maurice, the Rivière Rouge, the North River, the Lièvre, the Gatineau, the Coulonge ; lakes that are truly inland seas, such as Lakes St. John, Nomingue, Temiscamingue, contribute to the fertility of the country and serve as a means of communication where the iron horse is not yet at work. The soil is of marvellous fecundity, the surface largely undulating, and the land is adapted to all kinds of culture. Wood is found in abundance and the pastures rival in richness those of the North-West.

At Chalk River, one of the divisional points of the line, nature assumes a wilder aspect. Habitations become few and far between ; the horizons are of greater amplitude, and on the surrounding hills beautiful trees raise to heaven their plummy heads. They do not dream, these denizens of the forest primeval, that Progress is advancing from the east with giant pace and that ere long they also will vanish by axe and fire, those soldiers of destruction, the vanguard of unresting progress, from whose coming there is no escape.

Mattawa, which we pass at full speed, was a few years ago a simple post of the Hudson's Bay Company ; it is now a sturdy infant city of 2,000 inhabitants. The head of the Lake Temiscamingue Colonization Railway, it is destined to become a great entrepôt of trade to a territory of more than 600,000 square miles in extent. About ten years ago a Colonization Society undertook

the settlement of the Lake Temiscamingue region, and by dint of persevering efforts has succeeded in overcoming the indifference of some and the incredulity of others. To-day on the shores of the lake, which has an area of 300 square miles, and along the rivers that issue from it, some six hundred families have their homes, and the colonization movement is constantly yielding results. The land is remarkably fertile and, what is calculated to surprise the uninitiated, the climate of this northern region is more temperate than more southerly parts of the Province. Communication between Mattawa and Lake Temiscamingue was far from easy. The Ottawa, which traverses the lake through its whole length, is not navigable along its entire course, and between the lake and Mattawa numerous rapids intercept navigation. It was necessary, therefore, before undertaking to push immigration with energy in this direction, that a road should be opened. The company did not delay. It was decided that where navigation was impracticable short lines of railway should be built along the river. The work was at once begun and before the end of two years the road was finished.

I need not enlarge on the colonization of Temiscamingue. The single fact that the Canadian Pacific Company has just acquired the line from the Mattawa to the lake evinces the company's confidence in the future of the district; and this confidence ought surely to be a sufficient guarantee to those who hesitate to try their fortunes in this part of Canada.

What a scene is this! Nature in a state of topsyturviness: as far as the eye can reach, a chaos of rocks of every form and hue. In places one catches a glimpse of a few square feet of yellowish soil, covered with meagre brush and blanched and shrunken shrubs, the growth of which has for some reason been arrested. Such to the traveller is the appearance of the environs of Sudbury, only yesterday a spot lost in the vast solitudes of the North, and of which the fortune has been made by the timely pickaxe of a laborer! Here, indeed, by one of those sublime fancies which the savants will never succeed in explaining, in the midst of this nature apparently so inhospitable, Providence left a *cache* of incalculable treasures. The deposits of copper and nickel in Sudbury are deemed the most important in the world. The place itself is as yet but a little village of 1,500 inhabitants, situated on the main line of the Canadian Pacific, 40 miles north of Georgian Bay and 440 from Montreal. But already Progress has touched it with magic fingers, and in ten years the population will have risen to 20,000 souls. It is destined to be the centre of one of the richest mining districts on the American continent. Even now the land is of considerable value. Within a radius of six miles on each side of the railway it has been taken up by English, American and Canadian companies. Prospectors in search of new deposits must now bend their steps northwards. And, in fact, in rear of Sudbury, in the direction of James Bay, the lands, according to the statement of the Government geologist, are of unrivalled richness in minerals of all kinds, de-

posits of copper, nickel and argentiferous lead seeming to predominate.

From Sudbury extends in the direction of Lake Superior one of the most important branches of the Canadian Pacific—a line which connects the Canadian transcontinental system with that of the United States railways, and assures the Dominion, in a near future, the control of the traffic of the Western States. In this colossal enterprise of the Canadian Pacific, not less admirable than the boldness of the engineers who planned it is the assured foresight of the men who, from the moment of its inception, were able to establish on the surest foundations the economic future of the work. The question to be solved was not merely the construction, through a country three-fourths wilderness, of a railway 4,000 kilometres long. By means of dollars and of dynamite it was easy enough to overcome natural obstacles. But when the road was completed it was necessary to provide for its traffic until the country to which it was to give life should itself be in a position to support it. It was also indispensable to secure the young enterprise against American competition, while preparing for the struggle that must take place in a not distant future. The surest way to attain this twofold object was to anticipate on its own ground the rivalry which was apprehended. The scheme was a daring one, but the directors of the Canadian Pacific did not hesitate to put it into execution. And the most complete success has justified their boldness. Conjointly with the building of the transcontinental, the Company undertook the

construction of a whole network of secondary lines, which were laid out in such a way as to be feeders to the main line, while at the same time they attracted to Canada a considerable portion of the commerce of the Western States. All these projects were pushed on so rapidly that towards the middle of 1888 the Canadian Pacific Company, in addition to the 4,675 kilometres of the main line, possessed already 3,900 kilometres of secondary roads, which penetrated from all directions to the centre of the richest agricultural and industrial districts of the United States.

The McKinley bill may be regarded as the reply of the Americans to the challenge of their young and enterprising northern neighbor!

In some quarters the audacity of the Company has provoked criticism, accompanied by various charges. If the present position of the affairs of the Company did not furnish a complete refutation of such charges, it might be opportune to recall that in the latter months of 1884 the Company had already applied thirty-seven millions of dollars of its capital to works not stipulated in the contract, but which nevertheless were deemed absolutely indispensable for the success of the enterprise. I give this information simply to show how much the promoters of the road were influenced by patriotism and public spirit, and how utterly false were those who accused them of making a monopoly with the public funds or of speculating for the benefit of foreigners with the money of Canadian taxpayers.

During seven months of the year, from the beginning of May to the close of November, the River St. Lawrence is free from ice. Montreal is during this period the maritime port of North America that is nearest to England. By the Strait of Belle Isle the distance from that city to Liverpool is 2,660 miles. From Boston to the same seaport the distance is 2,950 miles, or 290 more than from Montreal. The problem, then, that the Canadian Pacific had to solve was to endeavor to turn the export traffic of the Western States to the greatest possible advantage of Montreal. To attain this object the Company had only to conform to the indications of nature herself, which seems to have framed the hydrography of North America with the single aim of favoring the economic interests of Canada. While the configuration of Lakes Superior, Huron, Erie and Ontario facilitates in a large measure the development of commercial relations between this country and the United States, that of Lake Michigan, on the contrary, forms a natural obstacle which the western traffic of the States must get round in order to reach the coast of the Atlantic. In other terms, Lake Michigan intercepts the direct line from the great agricultural centres of the West to the Atlantic Ocean. This straight line, again, that is, the shortest route from the centres of production in the Western States to the nearest ocean port, passes between Lakes Michigan and Superior and ends at Montreal. Of this very route the Canadian Pacific assured itself the control by means of the "Soo" branch. It now lies, therefore, with the Federal Government and the people

of Montreal whether the ancient city of Maisonneuve becomes what nature intended it to be—the most important maritime city in North America.

In short, the economic policy of the Canadian Pacific may be summed up in two lines. It has not only the control of the shortest route across the continent of North America, but it virtually commands the traffic of all the Northern States. And these results were attained, after ten years of effort, by a people of scarcely five million inhabitants. Is not this fact worth reflecting on by those who are tempted to imagine that the banks of the St. Lawrence are only peopled by annexationists of the Goldwin Smith type?

All morning we have been advancing along the shores of Lake Superior. The sky is overclouded, and the snow-flakes, driven by a violent gust from the south, have enveloped our train in a white whirlwind. We are running at full steam along a precipitous highway carved by dynamite from the flanks of a wall of granite. To the right, a hundred feet below, one sees through the storm the waters of the lake. The wind, which blows tempestuously, seems to be urging them to assault the rock at the summit of which the genius of man has cleared a way for progress and civilization. The scene is hardly perceived till it has vanished. The granite wall opens and the train ventures at full speed upon a long wooden bridge of giddy height. We are simply astride a valley, to the bottom of which descend the tumultuous waters of a torrent. Now and then, through rents in the storm, we catch glimpses of the billowy

surface of Lake Superior. It is a weird track. Here we skirt along abysses, there we cross the long trestle bridge, below which or not far off we guess, through the fog, the agitated waters of the bay. At last the train rounds a ridge, and wherever the eye is turned the waves of the lake spread out before us.

The weather has become fine, the wind is calmed, and standing on the rear of the train I take note of the enormous difficulties surmounted by the engineers in the construction of this part of the road. After passing Schreiber, one of the divisional points of the line, the track enters a sort of channel hollowed by dynamite in an enormous mass of red granite. To the right and to the left two walls of rock raise themselves to peaks. In some places they are from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet high. More than ten miles are thus traversed, the waters of the lake appearing only here and there.

Port Arthur is a pretty little town on the western shore of Lake Superior. It rises into an amphitheatre on the flank of a wooded hill and commands a view of Thunder Bay. Formerly the place where it stands was only visited occasionally by Indians or a few miners in quest of lodes of gold or silver. The harbor is well sheltered from the southerly blasts by the heights of Pic, Welcome, Thunder Cape, and by Ile Royale, the lofty cliffs of which may be seen some ten miles out on the lake. The commercial movement here is considerable. Port Arthur is indeed the head of the internal navigation of Canada. Some fifty steamers, besides the splendid packet-boats of the Canadian Pacific, put the

town in communication with Owen Sound, Collingwood, Sarnia, Duluth, Chicago and all the great maritime centres of the lakes. In 1882 the Canadian Pacific Company established a steamboat service between Owen Sound on Lake Huron and Port Arthur. This line was intended to place the Eastern Provinces of the Dominion in communication with those of the West until the completion of the railway north of Lake Superior. The trip on these magnificent steamers takes two days, and it offers all the incidents of an ocean voyage, while the scenes that are unfolded before the eyes of the tourist through the whole extent of Georgian Bay and in the approaches to Sault Sainte Marie are of fairy-like beauty.

Besides, the furnishing of these boats yields in no respect for comfort and even luxury to the most renowned trans-Atlantic steamers. They register 2,500 tons, are built of steel and are excellent for speed. The *cuisine* is good, the service well ordered, the officers are mariners accustomed to all the surprises of the lakes. It is not generally known that the navigation of the North American lakes is extremely dangerous, and that the tempests that arise on these vast stretches of water of more than 100,000 square miles are of a violence only equalled by the hurricanes of the English Channel. Although now that the route to the north of the lakes is opened the demand for the steamers of the Canadian Pacific is no longer so urgent, they might have to play an important rôle in case of complications with the United States. For they could easily be converted into fast cruisers for the protection of the northern shore of

Lake Superior from a surprise by the Americans. In any case they would form the nucleus of a fleet that England could rapidly concentrate on the lakes for the protection of the most vulnerable portion of the great strategic artery of the Dominion and of the Empire. The prosperity of Port Arthur is not only due to its privileged position on the lakes; it has another origin. The district of which this city is the centre abounds in deposits of argentiferous ore. Several mines are in full operation in the country around and every year new veins are discovered. Although they have been opened only a few years, these mines have already made the fortunes of several proprietors.

The star of Port Arthur is, however, threatened with eclipse by that of a small city situated some miles to the south of it, on the banks of the Kaministiquia, and which has been making undoubted progress. It was at the mouth of this river that General (now Viscount) Wolseley, in his campaign against the half-breeds of the North-West in 1870, established the centre of his commissariat. There stands now the city of Fort William, the home of a population of three thousand souls.* It is the terminus on the lakes of the western division of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The city derives its chief importance from the immense elevators constructed by the Company and capable of containing more than three

* Fort William may claim to have been founded by Duluth, whose name is borne by an American city further south, on the shores of the same great lake. It was formerly the metropolis of the fur-trading Nor'Westers.

million bushels of wheat. Fort William is destined to become in the near future the great entrepôt of the grain trade of the Canadian West.

Although civilization has barely penetrated to the shores of Lake Superior, electricity in its various forms has already made its appearance; the telephone is at work everywhere, and the two cities just mentioned have been placed in communication by a service of electric tramways.

From Fort William to Winnipeg nature is out of humor. The landscapes, which I contemplate by moonlight, are as desolate as those in the environs of Sudbury. Here, as there, nature's forbidding aspect hides away beneath the soil incalculable wealth. The explorers sent by the Federal Government to survey the country found all over it deposits of gold and silver of unrealized value. Every day some new mine is taken up to be worked, and in the train of the miners progress makes its way into the heart of the wilderness.

It is 7 o'clock in the morning, and the sun shines forth with all his splendor, flooding with his rays the lake, the wooded islets and all surrounding nature. The sky is of an absolute blue without a spot of grey, as far as the eye can reach. The surface of the ground, the roofs of the houses and the trees are covered with a thin robe of snow. The city is still sleeping, but columns of smoke that ascend straight upwards indicate that some house-keepers are already at their tasks. Not a sound breaks the deep and far-spreading silence save the measured breathing of the engine. We stop for a few moments

and I descend from the train. A slender layer of snow crackles under my feet: the thermometer of the station marks 14 degrees below zero. But not a breath of wind stirs the air. Ere long I feel that peculiar sensation which is so well known to those who have spent a winter in Manitoba—a sensation of physical and moral well-being which I cannot describe. It seems as if a weight were lifted off the shoulders and my spirits are correspondingly elevated. And this is just the beneficent effect which the cold of Manitoba exercises on the organism. It is dry, tingling, and seems to infuse into the blood a fluid that increases its vigor tenfold. The cold in the Eastern Provinces tends to stupefy, and, being saturated with humidity, provokes rheumatism. That of Manitoba, on the other hand, cures that malady.

Rat Portage is to-day part of the Province of Ontario, a commission of arbitration having so decided, in spite of the dissatisfaction of Manitoba. The struggle between the two provinces lasted long, and was pushed to an extreme, as is usually the case in new countries. At one time it became critical, when each province appointed its own magistrates at Rat Portage. Every office had two functionaries, with the result that by-and-by there was neither police nor justice. This state of anarchy did not, however, last long. Calm was restored. Rat Portage, forgetting its former quarrels, is advancing rapidly on the path of progress, and therefore of prosperity.

Five years ago the present city was only a village. To-day the population is beyond 3,000 souls. Numerous

saw-mills, grist mills and fishing establishments are rising up on the borders of the lake as well as at Keewatin, which is some seventeen miles distant. Auriferous deposits have been discovered in the environs of the city and have begun to be worked. High furnaces are in process of construction. During the summer a line of steamers put Rat Portage in communication with the American cities on the frontier.

After leaving Rat Portage the country undergoes a transformation. - Clumps of trees become more and more scarce; the ground undulates—the undulations diminishing gradually until at Beausejour the prairie makes its appearance, not to be left behind till we reach the Rocky Mountains.

Soon, in the distance, spires of churches and factory chimneys are vaguely outlined on the blue background of the horizon. We approach Winnipeg, the Queen of the Prairies of the Canadian West. We are now 1,424 miles from Montreal and 1,482 from the Pacific coast.



MANITOBA.

Winnipeg is the capital of the Province of Manitoba, and, although it numbers only twenty years of existence, it can proudly claim to be the metropolis—the mother city—of all the young cities of the West.

In 1870 it was a modest village, partly Indian, partly half-breed, yet in 1881 had 7,985 inhabitants. At the last census (1891) its population was said to be 25,642 souls, an increase of 221 per cent. in ten years. These figures need no comment; they indicate of themselves the prosperity of Winnipeg and the future reserved for it. Notwithstanding this prosperity, the history of the capital of Manitoba may serve as a lesson to those who are liable to lose their heads in view of the great natural wealth of the country. A too ambitious anticipation of riches almost plunged the nascent city a dozen years ago in irretrievable ruin. In 1882 the Canadian Pacific Company had made the banks of the Red River the headquarters of its operations in the West. Already Winnipeg was in communication with the Eastern Provinces, and the railway advancing rapidly towards the Rocky Mountains. Immigration assumed considerable proportions. A brilliant future seemed in sight. The moment seemed opportune for speculation. Winnipeg became the rendezvous of “boomers” of both the New World and the Old. In a few months the population doubled. The houses constructed were not sufficient to

accommodate the influx of new-comers, and tents were erected in streets, gardens, and all the surroundings of the city. A blast of folly (the worst of all follies is the mania for gold) swept over the young city. A few resounding blows of the hammer of the land auctioneer sufficed to turn the heads of the whole community. The Queen of the Prairies was to inaugurate her reign by a boom of prodigious significance, but alas! a crash of disaster of corresponding amplitude was to follow on its heels. The crisis began quickly. Every one was guaging his strength. The sellers of property were still timid, the buyers cautious. But ere long timidity and prudence had vanished. Little by little the small fry of speculation became excited as its upper hierarchy made some clever hits. The fever of stock-jobbing was slowly developing. Then all at once it declared itself in its full force and became epidemic, not only in Winnipeg, but over a considerable portion of the Dominion.

From day to day the price of land attained fabulous figures. A lot sold in the morning for a thousand dollars was sold again at noon for five thousand and in the evening for ten thousand. An agitated, delirious multitude of people jostled each other day and night in the streets. There was no cessation to the business; when the sun rose it began, when the lamps were lit it was continued over the champagne. The walls of houses were covered with placards of enormous size, indicating in big letters the numbers of the lots that were for sale. At the corners of the thoroughfares the auctioneers vociferated to a breathless crowd the wildest figures.

Fortunes made one day crumbled into nothingness the next. The telegraph employees were completely knocked up. Everywhere orders were coming in for purchase or sale. From London, from New York, from Paris even, despatches followed each other without intermission. Everyone wanted to have a lot in this city of Winnipeg which, it was predicted, would in a few months leave Chicago far in the rear. This delirium of covetousness lasted for some weeks. Then came a rude awakening. One fine morning, as if by enchantment, alarming news began to circulate, spread doubtless by some gluttoned speculator who thought it time to retire. The fever abated suddenly, and everyone began to count his gains or—losses. The results were most disastrous. The first runs of speculation had swallowed up the money in circulation. Before long business was conducted by verbal promise, credit or paper. When the hour for settlement came there was no money in hand. Thus it happened that on the day after the crash property that had been quoted at a hundred thousand dollars the day before was scarcely worth a few thousands. The consequences of this "boom" were ruinous, not only for those who had allowed themselves to be duped by it, but for the city itself. For long years it tended to compromise the course of business and had a singularly depressing effect on the value of property in the neighbourhood of Winnipeg. Still the energy of real men of business got the better of all embarrassment. Discouragement is an infirmity from which few suffer in the West. In fact, I recognized nowhere during my visit

any evil results from that wild speculation. The "boom" proved in the end simply a salutary warning, not only for Winnipeg, but for the whole North-West. To-day the capital of Manitoba is a great city in every sense of the word. It is built at the confluence of the Red River and the Assiniboine—water-ways that are both navigable and form commercial arteries of the first order; the Red River especially, which in its course traverses more than three hundred miles of American territory and discharges itself into Lake Winnipeg, commands the whole interior navigation of the North-West. Into Lake Winnipeg empties also the river Saskatchewan, navigable for more than four hundred miles from its mouth and whose two branches water the most fertile region in the North-West.

In 1881 the value of real estate was estimated in Winnipeg at nine million dollars (\$9,000,000) in round numbers. In 1899 this sum had risen to nineteen millions (\$19,000,000). The city is handsome and well situated and built on the American plan. The streets are of extraordinary breadth; they cross each other at right angles. Above the houses, along their fronts, from street to street, thousands of interlacing telegraph wires indicate the extent of the business transacted. The public buildings are of cut stone or brick. The English style of architecture everywhere prevails. Certain blocks appear like fortresses of the middle age, with their low doors, their turrets and their quasi-donjons, above which floats the British or Canadian flag. If the taste is doubtful, the solidity of these houses is beyond question, and is not that the main thing?

Winnipeg is for the West the grand centre of distribution. Its commercial ramifications extend from Lake Superior to the shores of the Pacific Ocean and regions that touch the Arctic. It is in direct communication with all the great centres of the United States. The business men of the city are full of enterprise and push; their confidence in the future of the city having been justified, their ardor for work joined to their unceasing good humor are the truest guarantees of the success of their efforts. I was, besides, struck at Winnipeg with the spirit of solidarity that animates the population. Politics apart, which here as elsewhere has its divisions, everyone, while working for himself, gladly takes his share in every undertaking that tends to promote the general prosperity. No one keeps himself in isolation from the general interests of the country. Not a day passes on which citizens of influence do not come together to discuss some question relative to the welfare of the community. These discussions are sometimes heated, but their warmth is a manifestation of energy that is not without its good results.

At the time of my arrival at Winnipeg the question most discussed was the construction of a new railway—that to Hudson's Bay. This project would connect the net-work of the Manitoba lines with the waters of the great bay by means of a road running directly northwards, passing between lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba, and following the courses of the rivers Nelson and Churchill to the mouth of the latter. According to the promoters this line would shorten, by several hundred

miles, the distance from Winnipeg to Liverpool. From Fort Churchill, one of the most ancient fur-trading posts of the West, steamers would carry merchandise to England, passing through Hudson's Strait. There is really nothing new in this scheme. It was this route that the powerful Hudson's Bay Company used formerly for its trade. By this same route Lord Selkirk's settlers penetrated to Manitoba in 1812. Hudson's Bay is open to navigation the greater part of the year; it is the strait only that is closed by the ice for six or seven months of the year. The construction of this line naturally raises the expectations of the people of Manitoba to a high pitch. Great hopes are based on figures that are not without their value. At the same time one may question the timeliness of an undertaking so considerable. Subsidized as it is by the local Government, it involves the province in large outlays at a moment when all the efforts of its public men should be devoted to the task of colonizing the country and developing, to the utmost extent possible, the local industries. The promoters of the project, whose energy is beyond all praise, maintain that the future of the province is intimately bound up with that of their railway. They predict that the latter, once in operation, will create a revolution in the trade of Western America. They anticipate the day when all the grain of the Northern States will pass through Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay. In theory these prophecies have their attraction. It remains to be seen what will be the issue in practice.

One thing is admitted—that, even if the line were com-

pleted, it could only be used for exportation during four or five months in the year, during the period, in fact, in which Hudson's Strait remains open and navigable. For seven months it will be simply a local line traversing immense solitudes which will be of service for colonization only after the fertile plains of the North-West are burdened with a surplus population! Manitoba already has a net-work of railways adapted to the needs of the province. Would it not be more prudent for the present to be satisfied with these lines and to utilize, for the development of agriculture and other industries, the immense sums of money that must be swallowed up in fresh railway enterprises?

In Manitoba the population is constantly on the increase, and the improvements are every year more and more numerous. Is it not time that the Government set about creating new industries so as to diminish the cost of living? Agriculture works rapid progress and from day to day the position of the settlers grows better. Still these settlers have to spend large sums for agricultural implements which as yet can only be obtained from Ontario or the United States. Now, if these implements were manufactured within the limits of the province, they could be procured much more cheaply by the settlers, to whom the discount would be of considerable advantage.

At Winnipeg complaints are heard of the scarcity of capital. A merchant once said to me, "Our province is young; everything has to be brought into being. A thousand enterprises could be initiated at once if we

only had the capital. But of foreign capital we have absolutely none. The industrial resources of our province have not been sufficiently brought to light. The wondrous wealth of our minerals has been emphasized at the expense of our northern forests and our unlimited water-power. British, French, German capital is concentrated in the States, whereas, if invested with us, it would yield dividends at least as remunerative. Now, our Government ought to try and remedy this state of things. Its first duty is to do for our industries what it has done for railways. Let our rulers offer bonuses sufficient to make profitable the first efforts, and you will see how immediately manufactures will start to life all over the province. Most assuredly the Government which will succeed in establishing in the midst of our population manufactures of cloth, of shoes, of hats, of agricultural implements, of paper (paper mills), of leather (tanneries)—in a word, which will encourage our industries and thus shape its policy to the benefit of the consumer, will have done more more to assure the wealth and prosperity of the province than the administration that gives us a Hudson's Bay railway."

And this merchant was undoubtedly right. It is not enough that the farmer should grow rich on these fertile prairies; it is also of importance that his money should remain in the province and multiply to its benefit. I only wish that the Government of Manitoba shared in my opinion, and that the energetic population of that fair province, whose claims I am fain to present to the reader, might thus be the gainer.

II.

The province of Manitoba is but a very small portion of that immense Canadian North-West, whose limits are the river Albany, on the east; on the west, the Rocky Mountains; to the south, the American frontier, to the north, the Polar solitudes. Omitting the lakes, the North-West, as thus delimited, has an area of 1,588,947 square miles. The area of Manitoba is only 64,000 square miles—an area double that of the Kingdom of Portugal. It occupies nearly the geographic centre of North America, equally distant from Atlantic and Pacific, and, as we have seen, it possesses all the conditions desired to make it the most thriving agricultural centre in the world. The Canadian Pacific Railway passes through it, thus marking from Winnipeg to Brandon the two chief agricultural zones of the country. West of Brandon is unfolded the richest stretch of wheat-land in America, perhaps in the world.

I have already spoken of the climate of Manitoba, but this is a point which the enemies of Canada select so often for their attacks, that it may be well to say once more what I think on the subject. It is the Manitoban winter that these adverse critics have delighted to paint in deterrent colors. And yet it is just this season which, by its incomparable charms, offers so remarkable a contrast. True though it be that for four months of the year the thermometer occasionally descends to 30 or 40 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit), the cold nevertheless has no other effect than to stimulate the activities of the

inhabitants. The nips of Jack Frost are taken in good part and borne with the utmost good humor. Never, indeed, have I seen the joy of living more fully exemplified than among the "blameless Hyperboreans" of Manitoba, in the very heart of their winter seasons. For, if the cold is intense, the sky is ever blue and the atmosphere is of a limpidity comparable to that of Algeria. The snow that falls is inconsiderable, the depth varying in different districts from 12 to 18 inches—a phase in which Manitoba's winter differs from that of Eastern Canada. On the 1st of April, 1891, the average depth of snow on the prairie was only 2 inches. At the same date it was 7 inches in the Province of Quebec, 11 in that of Ontario, and 16 in New Brunswick! In Manitoba, the number of rainy days in the year is, on an average, 54; in Ontario, 88; in Quebec, 91; in the Maritime Provinces, about 95. In Western Canada, there are properly speaking, only four months of winter, December, January, February, March.

The fall is long and dry.

On my return from British Columbia, on the 20th of December, the farmers were threshing their grain in the open air along the whole extent of the prairie, nor was there a trace of snow, save in the neighborhood of Winnipeg.

Moreover, the winter in Manitoba and in the whole of that great West is not a dead season. It is the time when the farmers transact their business. The snow, hardened by the frost, places at their disposal excellent

roads. Activity is general, and all carrying is done by means of traineaux especially made for use in the country. The salubrity of the climate is due to the dryness of the atmosphere. Chest diseases are quite unknown in Manitoba, and obstinate colds rare. One has only to look at the children, and there is no lack of them, to be assured of the healthiness of the region. The best advice to give to new-comers is to conform in every respect to the habits and usages of the country people—a precaution, unhappily, often neglected. Some settlers persist, in spite of warning, in acting differently from their wiser neighbors. These self-willed people bringing with them the customs of the land which they have left, clothe themselves and build their houses after the fashion of their kinsmen over the sea and by and by begin to complain of the severity of the climate. These are the witless people who succeed just as well, and no better, in Manitoba as they did in their native land. Every climate has claims on the good sense of those who make experience of it, and these can only be forgotten at great risk.

One thing is worth noting—Europeans settled in the North-West seldom feel the rigor of the first winter that they pass in the country. I do not pretend to explain this phenomenon, but content myself with pointing it out for the benefit of the immigrant who may read these pages and to whom I say: Distrust your own sensations and, though you may feel that they are not necessary, wear such wraps as you see your neighbors using from the beginning of the cold weather. You will thus escape

serious deception and a surprise which may, in your second winter, take the form of pulmonary disease.

In 1834 the population of what is now called Manitoba was 3,300 souls. In 1861, it had risen to 8,000; in 1871, to 12,000; in 1881, to 62,210. The census of 1891 indicates for the province a population of 108,640 inhabitants. In ten years, therefore, the population has increased at the rate of 145 per cent.

Some pessimists maintain that these figures are not satisfactory. One may hold a different opinion without posing as an optimist. In order to appreciate them at their true worth, it would be necessary to compare the extent of the Province of Manitoba with that of the other countries of the globe which likewise attract immigration, and to compare their respective methods to secure it. It would also be well to take into account the dates at which each of those countries entered this new kind of tournament, in which the ambition of each participant is to surpass all his rivals in progress and civilization.

I am inclined to believe that if all these points were carefully weighed, the issue would be in favor of Manitoba.

The first feeling I had on getting out of the train at Winnipeg was one of astonishment. The information that everyone is so eager to give the new arrival tends to make Manitoba an agricultural ElDorado; the samples of cereals that are put in one's hands and stuffed into one's pockets are so fine, so heavy, so granular; the general activity is so sincere, so natural, so fruitful that it

will be readily acknowledged how difficult it is for a stranger to attain a calm and impartial appreciation of the facts.

The wisest plan to gain a just idea of the country is perhaps to follow up the course of its colonization. The Red River Valley was the first field of settlement, and in this fertile district, therefore, we may begin our enquiry. This river is for Manitoba the main artery of navigation. It takes its rise in the United States, advances directly north and empties itself into Lake Winnipeg. This lake is a small inland sea of more than 4000 kilometres in area.

It may, indeed, be said, in parenthesis, that everywhere in America nature is on a grand scale; and, as for lakes and rivers, there are few countries so well supplied. The Canadian waterways have from time immemorial been the routes of natural communication by which missionaries, explorers, trappers and voyageurs crossed the country in every direction.

The soil of the Red River Valley is eminently well adapted for all sorts of culture. In most of the localities that I have visited it is black, rich in organic matters and easily worked. In fact, this land is the product of the decomposition of vegetable refuse during a long series of centuries. It therefore comprises all the fertilizing elements which elsewhere the farmer is obliged to provide artificially. So productive is it that the manure heap is considered nothing better than a nuisance and is destroyed by fire. Only a few far-seeing colonists turn it to account, well aware that, with what-

ever degree of fecundity a soil may be endowed, a day will come when impoverishment must begin.

The oldest agricultural district on the Red River is that of which Winnipeg is the centre. The value of property is considerable. The country is wooded and well watered.

The means of communication are numerous and well cared for. The inhabitants are, with few exceptions, Scottish half-breeds, descendants of the first colonists brought to the country by Lord Selkirk in 1812. The bulk of immigration does not come this way, the price of land being too high. I would, nevertheless, advise immigrants who, though not rich, are good gardeners, to examine this district attentively. By leasing an acre or two in the vicinity of the city, they would soon be able to improve their position.

Vegetables of all kinds grow in Manitoba with extraordinary vigor, and attain great proportions without losing their flavor. The yield of potatoes, carrots, turnips, beets, etc., is something marvellous. It is no uncommon thing to see an acre of land produce 300 bushels of potatoes or 800 bushels of turnips or 60 bushels of peas and all early. I have seen potatoes weighing three pounds each, turnips weighing twenty-five pounds, carrots from seventeen to forty-nine pounds, and whose diameter was over two feet, onions of a pound-and-a-half, etc. Asparagus, tomatoes, tobacco grow in the open air. Melons succeed wonderfully. I have seen some of more than thirty inches in circumference.

As one ascends the river, a change is observed in the

nature of the country. Gradually the woods disappear and give place to the prairie. On the prairie the soil retains the same note of fertility as on the lands along the river courses. It is still the same vegetable loam, friable, easily cultivated and abounding in nitrogen. Before 1879 a few of the settlers entered Manitoba by the United States route. The railway carried them to St. Paul, Minnesota, whence they reached the Canadian frontier by descending the Red River. These settlers travelled by short stages, in big covered waggons drawn by oxen. Some of them used the old "Red River cart" still in vogue among the Métis. This cart does not contain a morsel of iron. Wooden spikes are used instead of nails, and the wheels hardened by fire have no rims, and it is worthy of note that the axles of these carts, as old as time, are never greased. These structures are of immemorial use on the prairie and, in spite of their appearance, their solidity has stood every test.

The journeys accomplished by these early settlers were long, sometimes dangerous, on account of the bands of Indians who scoured the prairie. Still, with hope for guide, they reached their destination beyond the frontier.

Some pursued their way along the Red River, whilst others ascended the course of the Pembina or the Assiniboine, attracted by the fertility of the plain stretching out as far as the eye could reach. Painful enough were the experiences of these pioneers. Remote from the great centres, without direct communication and obliged to go long distances for the timber to build their houses,

these hardy settlers had to depend on their courage and endurance. Perseverance conquered, however, and they are to-day the men of means among the farmers of the province.

The opening of the railway from St. Paul to Winnipeg gave an impulse to the movement of colonization; but this movement did not attain its complete development until about 1883. The influx of settlers at this period owed its origin to the rapidity with which the Canadian Pacific Company opened up the country and to the unwearied energy with which it gave practical contradiction to the misrepresentations spread by its adversaries in England. Convinced that colonization would progress in proportion as railways were extended over the agricultural zone, the Company had no sooner terminated the main line than it began the construction of a network opening out the province through its whole extent. Some persons, less prejudiced than jealous, have denied the Company's colonization work, but this work is confirmed by eloquent figures. In the valley of the Red River, and in the portion of the province between the rivers Pembina, Assiniboine and Souris, there are at present 11,977 farmers, within a territory of about 9,000 square miles, three-fifths of which are still at the disposal of immigrants. These farmers sowed in 1891, 527,010 acres in wheat, 137,477 acres in oats, 51,665 acres in barley. The total of their harvest amounted to 1,333,252 bushels of wheat, 8,378,940 bushels of oats, and 1,839,273 bushels of barley. These figures show a yield per acre of 26 bushels of wheat, 44 bushels of oats and 24 bushels of barley.

The southern portion of Manitoba is not only adapted for cereals, but natural hay is produced in great abundance. Every farmer has an ample crop of it to winter his live stock. In 1890 the yield per acre of prairie hay was about 3,000 pounds an acre; in 1891, about 4,000 pounds. The healthiness of the climate, the abundance of water-power and above all the excellent quality of the hay make cattle-raising in this region one of the most remunerative of the farmer's sources of income.

In 1883 there were in the south and east of the province only a few thousands of horned cattle, and horses were for the most part Indian ponies. In 1891 the farmers of the same regions possessed 47,786 milch cows, 17,396 mares and 1741 stallions of every race from that of the English thoroughbred to the Scottish Clydesdale and the Percheron of France.

The dairy industry has taken a corresponding development. Butter and cheese manufactured in this country are of good quality, and command in foreign markets, higher prices than similar articles of American make.

The increase in value in landed property is an infallible index of the country's prosperity. In the part of Manitoba under review, this increase has been constant during the last ten years. In 1880, the average value of an acre of land was about a dollar; now it is ten dollars. In order to give their true significance to these figures, I would here make a remark. The area of the land now occupied by the settlers in southern Manitoba is about 67 per cent. of the total extent of territory. Everywhere and especially along the branch lines of the

Canadian Pacific the emigrant can to-day procure excellent land at a rate varying from two to ten dollars an acre. These prices are not based on the fecundity of the soil (which is virtually alike everywhere) but simply on the distance of the lots from the nearest railway. Some colonists prefer to buy land at a low price in order to be able to procure a larger extent; but they make a mistake which cannot be too strongly insisted on. In agriculture, the saving of time is a factor of the utmost importance. If this truth is in conformity with the practice of mankind in all parts of the world, it is of special importance in a new country where competition in the markets is increasing. If we compare, for instance, a settler who cultivates a hundred acres not far from a grain elevator, and one who cultivates two hundred at thirty miles' distance from it, the advantage is assuredly with the former. The out-of-the-way farmer must calculate to lose a third of his time in the transport of his products and all that he can do will hardly compensate for this loss of time.

A couple of years ago the Canadian Pacific opened to colonization the greater part of the Souris Valley—one of the richest regions in Manitoba, and to which goes no small share of the immigration. Important centres of population grow up as if by enchantment. Thirteen grain elevators built this year along the railway, attest the energy and success with which agriculture is developing in this part of Manitoba.

This Souris Valley is indeed destined in a near future to have a very real importance, industrial as well as

agricultural. Nature, with generous forethought, has stored up in the centre of this fertile region rich deposits of coal that can be worked without difficulty. The land is peculiarly fitted for wheat culture. The average yield per acre of all the cereals is higher than in any other part of Manitoba, being respectively 28 bushels for wheat, 49 for oats and 35 for barley. The average value of land in the Souris District is three dollars an acre but in five years this rate will be decupled.

The colonists brought out by Lord Selkirk in 1812 settled on the lower course of the Red River and there they fairly prospered. The emigrants who came later to try their fortunes in Manitoba, penetrated the same valley but farther south. Little by little as the current of immigration swelled, the colonists passed over into the adjacent valleys, but always with a tendency westward. Thus these settlers, guided solely by the fertility of the soil, rapidly colonized the southern region of Manitoba. The opening of the transcontinental railway was destined, by modifying the economic condition of the country to impart a new direction to this immigration, which, henceforth, instead of concentrating itself within a small area, was about to plant itself wherever the railway gave it access. The emigrants, moreover, had the guidance of a powerful Company to which their satisfaction and prosperity were of the deepest interest and which both helped them in their choice and encouraged them in beginning their new life.

The prairie between Winnipeg and the foot of the Rocky Mountains rises in successive terraces or tablelands

The first of these through which the line of the trans-continental railway passes, forms the great wheat region of the province of Manitoba. Thither for some years immigration has been directed by preference, as the flourishing districts of Portage la Prairie, Carberry, Brandon, and Virden sufficiently show. It is, in fine, on these plateaux that extend without a break in their uniformity as far as the eye can pierce, this Beauce of colossal proportions, that the soil is so marvellously fertile, yielding a hundred-fold the grain that the farmer places in earth's bosom.

In the districts just named, 4797 farmers sowed in 1891, 336,015 acres in wheat, and harvested 8,501,780 bushels of grain. The harvest of oats was so favorable that whereas in December last year it was sold in the Brandon market at 39 to 40 cents a bushel, it was sold this year (1892) in the same month at 15 to 20 cents.

I had already passed through Manitoba in the summer of 1885—eight years ago, when the settlement of the country was only beginning. Everything then was tentative, and people lost their heads to some extent in presence of that fine loamy land which stretched away as if to infinity and of which a lot could be acquired for a merely nominal price. What a change to-day! From Winnipeg to the furthest limits of the province, a distance of 211 miles, rise at intervals of seven miles or so, large towns, with here and there a few cities, populations varying from 2,000 to 5,000 inhabitants. On each side of the railway, as far as the eye can reach, the prairie is covered with thousands of ricks, symmetrically

arranged by groups of a dozen. Scattered over the plain, out to the very horizon, are hundreds of steam threshing-machines at work. Nor will they rest during the winter. I emphasize this detail, for it proves what the climate of Manitoba really is, in opposition to misconceptions of its character. During the months of December, January, February and March the grain that is not threshed remains in the open air in ricks. Often after the process is finished, it is put into sacks which are left on the prairie all winter piled up and covered with straw.

Brandon is the great wheat market of Manitoba. It is a town of comparatively recent foundation, having had no existence in 1881. In 1889 it was a city only in name—a name rather pretentious for a place of three streets, a single avenue and a few modest hotels of wood.

To-day, Brandon has an area of four square miles and the houses are built of cut stone. It is lit by electricity and its public buildings are of superior style. It is situated on the south slope of the Assiniboine Valley and on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Its market commands the trade of the upper course of the Assiniboine, of the Souris Valley and of a wheat district of more than forty thousand square miles. Seven elevators stand in line at the foot of the city along the sidings. At the doors, as I leave the train, are long files of wagons awaiting their turn to discharge their load of wheat. The utmost activity reigns in the city. The streets are invaded by the farmers of the surrounding country who take advantage of the exceptional fine

weather to dispose of as much of their grain as possible.

At the door of my hotel stands a big wagon painted blue and harnessed to two sturdy Clydes with glossy skins. The metal of the harness glittered; the whole rig was evidence of the owner's prosperity.

The fine style of the horses, vehicles and harness of the North-West farmers strikes those who visit the country. On the roads, in winter as in summer, in the fields at sowing, plowing and harvest, this get-up is only surpassed by that of the drivers. In fact, on the plains of the North-West, the farmer has a high sense of his self-respect. He considers himself a gentleman farmer. He does not believe that, in order to till the ground, one must dress in rags. He respects his work as that which leads him to fortune and never begins it unless he is well clad. Here we see no laborers barefooted and in filthy tatters. The pioneer of the West wears a broad-brimmed felt hat, a colored flannel shirt, a belt of the same material and roomy trousers, stuffed into boots that reach to the knee. And it is only just to add that the man whom we meet on the prairies in this picturesque garb is ever courteous, eager to serve you and always ready to offer you pot-luck. In his belt you do not see those murderous pistols which, in illustrations, distinguish the Yankee ranchman or cowboy of the Wild West. Nor is this absence of the pistol so commonplace a matter as certain readers might be inclined to consider it.

It is the complete security in which the Western Canadian farmer passes his life which peculiarly characterizes the country. From the shores of Lake Supe-

rior to the shores of the Pacific; from the United States frontier to the Arctic Ocean, the traveller may pursue his way without the least fear through the boundless prairie or the vast solitudes of the far North. No matter where one encamps, the sleep is never troubled by the howling of coyotes or the hootings of the birds of darkness. The Canadian North-West is as vast as that of the States. While the latter is every day the stage of darkest tragedies, the former is, on the other hand, inhabited by a peaceful population in the midst of which desperadoes would cut a poor figure.

Only an imaginary line separates one country from the other, and yet how marked is the difference of moral standard and practice! To what is this contrast to be assigned? By and by I may suggest some other cause for it, but meanwhile I content myself by the indication of a couple of reasons. For one thing, the Canadian North-West has for more than a hundred years been frequented by the *hommes de la prière*—the missionaries, and the rôle of these missionaries has always been that of peace and good will. With the *coureurs de bois* in the service of the fur companies, they were the pioneers of these regions. Their only arms, whether of offence or defence, were persuasion, mildness, confidence. Was it not natural then, that the civilization of which they were the forerunners should be imbued with their example and teaching?

The United States far West never profited to the same degree by the benefits of evangelization. The Indian tribes who roamed there had never, during the long

centuries heard other accents than the agonizing cries of a wretched people massacred by the whites. Is it not permissible to suppose that the remembrance of the crimes committed by the Spaniards in Mexico and their other new-world colonies may have left its impress on the traditions bequeathed from generation to generation by the aborigines of America? If such be the case, can we wonder that the Indian tribes scattered through the Western States have always pursued with their hatred the cruel Pale-faces?

The security enjoyed by the settlers in the Canadian North-West is also due to another cause. For more than fifty years the exodus from Europe was directed to the United States, before it came to be Canada's turn to open her doors to the new-comers. This delay was the salvation of the Dominion. The current of population that carried towards the gold fields of California, Nevada, Montana or Colorado, the plains of Texas or Arizona, all the adventurers of Europe had run its course when Canada became a field for immigration. That current did not deviate from the route that led to its destination. Such is still the impetuosity of its movement that the United States authorities, in spite of their restrictions on immigration, have not succeeded in arresting it. The United States, in fine, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Washington government, will remain the *refugium peccatorum* of the globe. They will continue to monopolize the sad privilege of retaining within their boundaries all the cut-throats and train-robbers who could never gain right of citizenship in Canada.

But to return to Manitoba, the progress of agriculture is perhaps more remarkable than the increase of population to which I have called attention, for it enables us to regard the future with confidence. In 1882 the province comprised only 2,250 farmers. These farmers had sown an aggregate of 182,250 acres of wheat, and harvested 4,974,200 bushels of grain. In 1891, 18,937 farmers harvested 24,000,000 bushels of wheat and the extent of land thus put under cultivation was 916,664 acres. These figures show an average yield for the province of $25\frac{1}{2}$ per acre. In France the average yield per acre is not more than 17 bushels. By dividing amongst 18,937 farmers the area of land sown in wheat it is evident that each farmer must have sown an average of $48\frac{1}{2}$ acres of wheat. Every farmer in the province, therefore, will have produced (48.5×25.5) 1,236 bushels of grain in round numbers. Again, if we allow to the bushel of wheat an average value of 80 cents, then 1236 bushels will represent a gross gain of 889 dollars.

But in Manitoba the cultivation of a bushel of wheat stands the farmer about 32 cents. Every farmer will therefore have spent about \$395 to bring a harvest of 1,236 bushels. The net gain in each case will therefore be about \$493, or \$10 for every acre devoted to wheat.

I may add that the manager of one of the banks of Brandon told me that in his district several farmers had this year, with the proceeds of their crops, paid up in full for their property.

It is hardly necessary to repeat that these figures have to do solely with a single crop, and the reader

must not forget that the proportion of land cultivated to the total area of Manitoba was one to seven. Seven million acres of the most fertile land in the world are at this moment unoccupied, and may be acquired for a merely nominal price.

A noteworthy phenomenon has been observed in the culture of wheat in America, the knowledge of which cannot but increase the confidence that Manitoba inspires in the grain markets of Europe. I mean the northward tendency of the growth centre of this cereal. Thirty years ago, this crop was almost entirely concentrated in the States of Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. To-day it is Minnesota, Dakota and Montana that constitute the great wheat centres of the United States. Still, in these States the yield per acre of the soil is much less than in Manitoba and the Canadian North-West. The average yield in Illinois is not more than 8 bushels an acre, 11 in Wisconsin, 13 in Minnesota and North and South Dakota. In Manitoba it is, as we have seen, 25 bushels.

Another cause tends to deprive the American farmer of the supremacy in the wheat markets of Europe. I mean the competition in these markets of Russian, Indian and Australian wheat. In 1835 the United States exported 81,628,478 bushels of wheat to Europe, whilst India exported only 29,550,741 bushels. In 1886 these figures had sensibly modified. The United States exported only 53,025,938 bushels, against 39,312,969 exported by India.

The McKinley bill, besides, does not tend to ameliorate the fortunes of American farmers. It rather tends, on

the contrary, to exhaust, in a near future, all the sources of public wealth which were once fostered by agriculture. For several reasons Canada need not fear this foreign competition, so far as her wheat is concerned. In the first place, for many years, the local consumption will almost absorb the entire crop in Manitoba. This will happen, on the one hand, through the needs of immigrants, and, on the other, because in the eastern provinces farmers will give up wheat-growing to devote themselves to stock-raising.

On the other hand, the wheat of Manitoba has a reputation that increases from day to day. It commands on the English markets high prices, and by its qualities defies foreign competition. Neither must we lose sight of the new line of steamers which connects Vancouver with the shores of China and brings Asia within twelve days' distance from Canada, opens to Canadian cereals a new and boundless market, of which the trade of the country may easily secure the control.

The moment is now come to say a few words about the premature frosts as to which the enemies of North-West colonization make so much noise. That in the last weeks of August, or from the 1st to the 15th of September, strong hoar-frosts descend on the crops yet standing, is only too true. But it is only the improvident who suffer from these frosts, which do not affect the great mass of North-West farmers. This statement requires a word of explanation. In every new country, where the price of land is only nominal, the new-comer is exposed to a dangerous temptation—that of the ambi-

tion to become all at once a great proprietor. Everything conspires to make him yield to this temptation—the smallness of the price of the land that he covets, the facility of becoming a proprietor on credit, and finally the fear lest the price of real estate should augment and become too great for his means. His very desire to succeed thus, in this case, plays him an ill turn. Sometimes the settler, in his natural impatience to grow rich without delay, is deceived as to his own strength. He forgets that the power of working has a limit which cannot be transgressed with impunity. He ploughs when he ought to harrow; he harrows when he ought to be sowing; he sows when he ought to be rolling. The result is that his crop is scarcely ripe when it is nearly time to cut it. It is the farmers of this type who fall victims to the early frosts, which attack only those crops that are still unripe in the last week of August. These farmers suffer from having misunderstood the burden of the proverb, *Qui trop embrasse mal étreint*. The early frosts, which are employed as a bugbear to frighten European emigrants, are innocuous for farmers who follow certain conditions. For instance, let them sow each year only the exact extent of ground that is proportioned to the workmen that they engage; let them plough and harrow their land in the fall, to the exclusion, if necessary, of all other work; finally, let them use the first fine days in spring for sowing, and on no account defer the operation.

In Manitoba the sowing begins generally towards the end of April, and continues to the 15th of May. In

some parts of the North-West, as at Maple Creek and at Calgary, the grain is put in the ground in the closing days of March.

One fact will confirm these remarks. At the outset of colonization in Manitoba, the settlers took no notice of what are called early frosts. Small proprietors, for the most part, they had ample time to cultivate their farms. Besides, the grain ripened in time to defy those unlucky frosts, which only began to have victims when farmers allowed ambition to get the better of their prudence.

The regions of northern and north-western Manitoba have a physical aspect quite different from those that we have been describing. On the borders of Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba the country is flat, covered with prairie grass, and well wooded. The land is fertile. Still, in this district more work and also more knowledge are required of the farmers than in the neighborhood of Brandon, for instance. This is owing to the lowness of the land, which is sometimes flooded. Drainage and other precautions, not dreamed of in the central portion of the province, are therefore necessary. The country is admirably adapted for mixed farming. Although the land is cheap, as yet colonization has not progressed very rapidly, owing to the general preference for the wheat-lands, the idea naturally prevailing that on the latter labor will win quicker and more remunerative returns.

The chief centre of settlement in this district is the town of St. Laurent, situated on the shores of Lake

Manitoba. This was formerly a Roman Catholic mission, and this mission, indeed, still exists. But around its modest church are grouped numerous families of half-breeds and immigrants. The country is becoming rapidly cleared, the plain is well cultivated, and stock-raising is carried on on a large scale.

From Portage la Prairie a line of railway extends to the north-west of the province—the Manitoba & North-Western Railway. As one looks to the right and to the left of the route, after reaching a short distance from the Portage, there is nothing to recall the plain that has been left behind. To the broad undulations of land succeed pretty valleys, separated from each other by slight ridges of hills covered with wood and pasture. Everywhere water flows in abundance, and numerous falls enable one to foresee, in a future not very distant, an important centre of manufacturing industry. Along the Manitoba & North-Western colonization is making rapid progress. Several colonies of Hungarians, Scandinavians and Icelanders have been founded. They are prosperous, and their success is the best advertisement in favor of Manitoba as a field of immigration for the poorest class of farmers.

In every direction, in this fair province, progress advances with giant strides. Every year the country undergoes a new transformation, and each of these transformations is a stage in the path of prosperity.

V.

The Canadian North-West and the Province of Manitoba, which is geographically part of it, constitute a field of immigration without rival in the world. This field is immense, being in extent equal to the half of Europe. If twenty millions of people took possession of the soil from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains and the American frontier to the Arctic zone, there would still be scope for immigration for years to come. By one of those marvellous coincidences of which Providence alone has the secret, Canada opens the doors of its half continent of territory to colonization and progress just at the moment when an economic crisis of gravest character is embarrassing the nations of Europe. Just when the landed proprietors of the Old World are abandoning the cultivation of the soil through discouragement at the rivalry from over the sea encountered in their own markets; just when the agricultural population of France, of Germany, of Belgium, of Italy, is deserting the country to flock to the towns; just as, in the Old World, the value of land is lowering from day to day, there arises, in the fullness of its vigor, a young country, whose soil has for ages been holding in reserve its life-giving sap, where nature has laid up treasures inestimable, and where the land, marvellously fruitful, can be obtained at a merely nominal price. In this chapter I would like to say a few words about this question of emigration—a question at once vital and delicate, since thereon depends the happiness of thousands of individuals, who from year to year exile themselves in search of it.

Of all men the emigrant is the one whose head is most a prey to illusions. This is doubtless natural and quite excusable, and fortunately these illusions last with the majority only for a short time; they vanish in contact with reality. Reason in time gets the better of imagination. There are others, however, in whose minds these illusions remain in spite of dearly bought lessons. The latter can never prosper. Success flies from them to attach itself to their more provident neighbors.

In conversing with immigrants I have learned that with some of them success means a well-filled purse, an error which the true friends of colonization should not hesitate to combat. The determination not to be discouraged by any obstacle; the resolve firmly taken to conform to the usages of the country in which they have made their home—in these qualities, rather than in quickly won gold, lies the future prosperity of the immigrant.

Whether he be the son of a humble artisan or a scion of nobility, the settler should bear in mind that money may facilitate his enterprises, but only in energy and ability will he find the key to abiding success. In the present chapter I have to do only with the *bona fide* immigrants, those who came to Canada to make their livelihood out of the soil. In the West, indeed, there is no place for office clerks, salesmen or professional men. Such as these emigrate only at the risk of losing their money, their time and their energy. Nevertheless, if among this class there are any courageous enough to serve an

apprenticeship to a new occupation and to devote themselves resolutely to the culture of the soil, let them, after testing their strength and health, come along and with perseverance they too may find prosperity in this Land of Promise. In the Canadian North-West, the fertility of the soil is so great, the ground is so easily worked that tillage is reduced to the simplest of acts. But success does not depend merely on the extent of the farmer's agricultural knowledge; rather it lies in the aptitude for work and in the faculty, well exercised, of accommodating his labor to the exigencies of climate. A notary's clerk, for instance, will probably find himself on the street if he tries to live by his profession, but if he is intelligent, patient and observing, and takes an engagement on a farm, he may in a few months have mastered the business and be in a position to rival his more experienced neighbors.

The great mass of those who emigrate may be divided into two classes, the more numerous the poorer element, endowed with no means but their energies and who possess on their arrival not more than a hundred dollars. The second class consists of those who came to Canada from Europe, after having turned all their worldly goods into hard cash. These latter intend to begin anew the struggle of life and to attach themselves to the soil, if fortune smiles on them. In general, they possess from five hundred to two thousand dollars. Those who are first-class farmers ought not to hesitate a moment on their advent in the West, but go resolutely to work without losing a day. Let them not dream of settling

on a farm with a hundred dollars. Though some have made the venture and succeeded, they form the exception and to imitate their example is to challenge fortune. The object of every immigrant is to make his future independent. This is the dream of every new-comer, and in Canada it can always be realized, and sometimes by the man without resources in preference to the man with well-stocked purse. The best plan for the poor man is to seek at once employment on a farm. To that end he should consult the local agent of the Government or C. P. R., who, on learning his circumstances and needs, will give him all the information that he wants.

A word of warning may at this juncture not be out of place. Many immigrants, having made their demand, set out for a tour through the city and thus incur two dangers. The first is to miss the chance of a suitable berth; the second, a graver risk, is to fall into the hands of some of those confidence men who lie in wait for new-comers, who drink at their expense and who sometimes succeed in making them lose not only their heads but their savings. The immigrant cannot be too emphatically advised to trust implicitly to the agent, unless he has relatives who are expecting him. It is the mission of the agent to look after the immigrant's interests, and it is the misfortune of many new arrivals that they do not follow his counsel. Trusting to their own judgment they have been grievously deceived. Ninety-nine times out of the hundred this is what happens when they rely on themselves and chance acquaintances, rather

than on the immigration agents. An immigrant who is willing to work is always sure of remunerative employment. From March to November the demand for laborers in the immigration offices is constant. During my trip, I met all the way from Montreal to the Rocky Mountains gangs of laborers from the eastern provinces who were returning home after spending seven months in Manitoba or the Territories, assisting the farmers in their work. The average wages realized by these men varied from 250 to 340 dollars.

In the West, a farm hand, engaged by the year, receives from twenty-five to thirty dollars a month, besides being fed and lodged. At harvest time the wages are are higher.

A laborer will make from forty to forty-five dollars a month. The average rate per day for a man's work in Manitoba varies from \$1.50 to \$2.50.

Women can as easily find employment as their husbands. In all the cities of the West the demand for female cooks and nurses is unceasing, wages ranging from \$15 to \$30 a month.

During my stay in Manitoba I gave much attention to the position of the immigrants arriving in the country with no other fortune than that which they owe to the vigor of their arms and the strength of their wills, and the conclusion forced on me is that they never fail to find work—remunerative work which enables them in a couple of years or so to realize the longing of their hearts and to become proprietors. I do not fear moreover to affirm that of all the settlers that I met the

most prosperous were exactly those who had begun their career in the service of others.

The immigrant who, though poor, is determined to work and who hires himself out for a few years before setting up an establishment of his own, has an advantage over his wealthy companion, who can only begin his new career by more or less expensive experiments. While making money he is winning an experience which will be of the utmost value when he becomes his own master. I will now state the conditions on which the immigrant who hires himself out may lay by in two years sufficient to establish him on a farm of his own.

Above all he must be a man of stability, and not to be turned aside from his purpose. He must be observant and study the country from which he expects to derive a livelihood and perhaps the status of a man of wealth. He must assimilate himself to the usages of the community in which his lot is cast, and never forget that every dollar spent needlessly goes to retard him in his advance to independence. In fine, his motto should be: perseverance, industry and economy.

Every year a crowd of young men, English, French and German, go to the North-West to make their fortune. Most of them have a little money ; many of them, more than is good for them. The aspirants to the life of the colonist sometimes have their heads full of illusions which the reading of some of the pamphlets put in their hands does not tend to dissipate. My advice to these young men, whatever may have been their social position before, however well stocked their purses, is to imitate

without the least hesitation, for a time at least, the immigrants of whom I have already spoken. Let them hire themselves to farmers and, while working for others they will serve a profitable apprenticeship to the occupation which is to be their life's work. Once on the prairie, let them forget their past or only recall it to derive courage from it, to conquer the future. Let them avoid surrounding themselves with helpers when they have started in earnest as farmers, but learn to depend on themselves in tending the soil that is to enrich them. This will pay better than beginning by having a good time. In the West the only social distinctions are those which are based on industry and success, and it is foolish to ignore this fact.

The second class of immigrants is composed of all those who go to the West to invest their capital to advantage. The causes which determine persons of this class to seek the great West are three-fold: the constant fall in value of property in Europe, the corresponding increase in the cost of living, and the overwhelming burden of taxation, which absorbs so large a portion of their income. Nowhere can they seek a remedy for these ills with more reasonable hope of success than in the Canadian West. For here the value of property is increasing daily; living is not costly, if the settler is satisfied to live modestly, and, as for taxation, save a municipal tax on real estate, it does not exist at all. The conditions of success are identical for all immigrants whether they be rich, have merely a competency or are at the start actually penniless. These are prudence and

economy in the purchase of land according to the means at their disposal and the same qualities after they have begun their new life.

The first question to be decided is the class of agriculture to which the settler desires to devote himself, wheat-growing or mixed farming. The latter is what every man of experience will advise him to choose.

The making of cheese and butter is constantly enlarging its limits in Manitoba. It is really all the more profitable an industry that it can be carried on with virtually no extra outlay. The farmer takes his milk to the factory, and at the end of the season he is paid. His main object is to so feed his cattle as to make them essentially milkers.

This question of the kind of farming settled, let the new-comer reckon up the funds at his disposal before repairing to the Crown Lands office and let him make up his mind beforehand as to whether he wants to obtain a homestead or to purchase lots. In either case he must carefully calculate his budget, and make sure that the total amount of his outlay does not exceed two-thirds of his entire capital. I would especially emphasize this point. For too often the immigrant spends on his installation in his new home all the money he has in the world, leaving himself absolutely nothing for unforeseen contingencies. The result, not unnaturally, is often the greatest embarrassment.

Another serious mistake is to acquire more land than the settler can cultivate. A good many thus undertake a burden which ere long crushes them to the ground.

The true principle, based on years of experience and the judgment of expert settlers, is not to purchase more land than what the owner can, without outside aid, put under cultivation in the course of four years.

Another point to be borne in mind is that, whatever his previous record, however wise his experience in his former position, the settler in the prairie must undergo a probation, must become acquainted with the climate, conditions and method of culture of the new country, under penalty, unless he do so, of paying dearly for his neglect. It is, therefore, only common prudence to husband his resources until his knowledge of soil, climate and methods has made him master of the situation, and then he can lay out his means in the assurance of good returns. For the colonist who has not more than from \$400 to \$600 a homestead will be the wisest choice. But he who has a few thousands at his command may purchase a property and make of it what employment he pleases. In either case nearness to a line of railway is an advantage not to be foregone. Finally, as I have said, the new-comer must conform to the usages of his *milieu*, and, if he is wise, he will pose neither as a critic nor a reformer till he has won the honor of citizenship and furnished evidence of his personal worth. Courtesy and modesty in word and deed are virtues that have their value among the settlers of the North-West as elsewhere in this world of strife. If the settler only observes the conditions that I have here set down, I do not shrink from assuring him the success that is his due.

But it is not to the settler only that the Canadian

North-West offers a field of fruitful endeavor: it also places within reach of the European capitalist opportunities for investment that are practically limitless. Needless to enter into details as to the sources of revenue which with judgment and discernment may be profitably developed. In a word, *everything* awaits the head and hand of enterprise in this immense country, and whatever be the path of enterprise pursued, the goal is success, if only prudence be the guide and the motto, *festina lenté!* Of course for some years to come, of all these various paths of enterprise, those that are based on the cultivation of the soil must be the most remunerative.

In this connection it is important to bear in mind that an economic evolution of considerable range is about to begin. Of this development the origin is to be looked for in that two-fold movement disclosed on the one hand by the progressive depreciation of land in Europe, and on the other, by its constant rise in value in the New World, and especially in the new provinces of Canada. This movement of simultaneous rise and fall in the value of property on both sides of the ocean is a sure indication of the coming crisis.

Whilst in Europe the land is almost everywhere exhausted and can supply men's needs only when it is artificially revived, in Canada more than 150,000,000 acres of black loam, the fructifying properties of which half a century of culture could not exhaust, are to be had at a merely nominal price. Whilst in Austria, in France, in Italy the average yield of an acre of land is not more than 14, 17 and 9 bushels of wheat respectively, and this

notwithstanding the enormous outlay of sums for fertilizers, in Manitoba the virgin soil produces 25 bushels an acre. Moreover, whereas at this moment a third of the land property in Europe is allowed to lie waste, every year, hundreds of thousands of acres are, on this side of the Atlantic, opened to cultivation. The day is not far distant, therefore, when the European farmer, seeing the circle of operations gradually contracting around him, will realize that every stroke of the spade given by the Canadian settler in the prairie deepens the abyss of ruin towards which he is inevitably drawn.

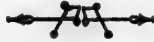
The continental powers of Europe are not insensible to this state of things, and they have summoned to their aid protection in all its forms. But though this policy may palliate the evil, it brings no permanent remedy. A customs tariff can no more restore its vigor to the exhausted soil than it can prove an effective barrier to products the cost of which in their native home tends constantly to diminish. But the European producer may protect himself by turning to his own profit the economic crisis that threatens him. To that end let him extend his radius of action and entrench himself in the centre of the outside competition which he finds so ruinous. In other words, let the great landed proprietor of Europe take his place as a cis-Atlantic producer.

That this transformation is not impossible is quite clear from what Englishmen have already accomplished. Men of means and enterprise belonging to that nationality, have in considerable numbers taken up tracts of land in the North-West, which they either work them-

selves or put in charge of competent agents. For their lands they have paid from two to ten dollars an acre. The expenses are not great, while the returns are admittedly large. In assuming the rôle of land-owner in the North-West, the European farmer or capitalist not only improves his actual position, but, through the constant increase in the value of his lands, he makes an investment which is both advantageous and certain. In 1890 the value per acre of cultivated land in Manitoba was about nine dollars. In the ensuing year the value was estimated at \$10.85. In 1890 in the same province, 108,772 acres of new land were under cultivation; while the extent of new lands cleared in the course of 1891 was 178,350 acres.

It is also to be considered that in Europe a vague uneasiness has invaded the public mind. Social questions of the most complicated character occupy the attention of many. Statesmen, economists, members of the middle and artisan classes, workingmen in city and country, are all, according to their interests, their lights or their leanings, seeking to solve this formidable problem of socialism, which raises a threatening head in face of the scepticism that gave it birth. On the prairie these perplexities are unknown. There everyone is engaged in working to-day to make provision for the future. The hearts of all are full of courage because they are full of faith. Socialism has there no business, so far at least as it stands for injustice or immorality, the supreme law of productive toil levelling all classes of society and making misery unknown. The sole questions that en-

gage the pioneers of the West relate to the means by which their prosperity is to be secured, and of this prosperity they are themselves the conscious arbiters. Assuredly, unless they were assiduous in their daily tasks and mindful of their social and moral obligations, no law, however cunningly devised, could further their well-being.



THE TERRITORIES.

I.

Before proceeding on our journey through the prairie region, it may be well to give the reader some idea of the extent of the Canadian North-West, the most fertile regions of which we have just been traversing. Away north-west of Manitoba stretches an immense district known as Keewatin, the area of which exceeds that of the Austrian Empire. Covered almost through its whole extent, by thick forests, for the most part of pine, this territory is destined to become the great forest reserve of Manitoba when the population of that province has attained its maximum density. West of Manitoba extends the district of Assiniboia, with an area equal to that of half of Spain. To the north lie the fertile valleys of the district of Saskatchewan, with an area equal to that of Italy, while beyond Assiniboia, westward, stretching to the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains, beyond which again are the fertile valleys of British Columbia, are unrolled the rich pasturages of Alberta, equal in area to the half of France. North, again, of Alberta lie the 150,000 square miles of Athabasca which offer to the venturesome immigrant vast solitudes as yet scarcely explored—lands that, for fertility, do not yield to those of Manitoba or the richest zones of the more southerly Territories. These four Districts, which constitute the Territories so far organized, are

bordered on the north and east by a mighty expanse of more than 800,000 square miles of as yet unexplored forest land watered by magnificent rivers and lakes whose dimensions are in keeping with the vast proportions of the country. In 1881 the population of the districts of Assiniboia, Alberta and Saskatchewan was estimated at 25,515 souls. In 1891 the increase of population in these districts was 16,524 souls, thus giving in ten years an augmentation of 64.76 per cent. During the last two years, colonization has overflowed to the north and south of the line of the Canadian Pacific, and the company has spared no effort or expense to favor this movement by opening up new routes to the centre of the Saskatchewan and Alberta districts. A dozen years ago the journey from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains was a veritable expedition, lasting in general five weeks, and accomplished mainly by Red River carts or on horseback. The traveller had to take with him provisions, cooking apparatus, and, in fact, all the material for camping out, and to follow the trails or prairie tracks made by the Indians and hunters. Now and then a buffalo was outlined on the horizon, the apparition causing all the more joy, as at that time these monarchs of the plain had almost entirely vanished from the scenes where they were once so populous,—the Indians having sacrificed them for their flesh, the whites for their hides. At last, after long days of marching across the seemingly boundless prairie, the long file of carts and horsemen arrived in sight of the Rockies, their destination. To-day, on the other hand, the journey from Winnipeg to

Calgary is made in thirty-two hours, and the Company put at the disposal of the passengers all the delicacies of modern comfort: the best of viands, of wines, of beds, bath-room, and library well stocked with literature for instruction and entertainment. Nature does her share for the tourist by unfolding scene after scene, the charm of which makes *ennui* impossible from start to terminus.

On leaving the limits of Manitoba the Canadian Pacific Railway enters the district of Assiniboia, which it crosses from east to west. From the twofold standpoint of colonization and agriculture, this district is divided into two sections, of which nature herself has undertaken the determination. The eastern portion, extending from the confines of Manitoba to the foot of the Missouri plateau, forms the second of the three successive terraces that partition the route from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains. It comprises on the north the valleys of the Assiniboine, the Qu'Appelle and their tributaries; on the south, those of the Pipestone, Moose Mountain Creek, the Souris and Long Creek. The characteristics of this portion resemble those of Manitoba, the soil being lighter, though not less fertile. The ground is more varied, especially towards the north, and more wooded, and is favorable for mixed farming. The settlement of it is advancing rapidly. Whilst towards the south, on the borders of the Pipestone, the settlers are largely English or Scotch, towards the north, especially in the rich valley of the Qu'Appelle, the population includes a considerable French-Canadian element. Some English companies have founded agricultural settlements

in the district of Assiniboia, and they have been remarkably successful. The basis of organization is simple, and the results have been satisfactory. A certain extent of territory is purchased and divided into lots of uniform area, about 160 acres. The immigrants who take these lots are generally found in England, their passage out is paid, and the company also advances them sums of money ranging from £80 to £120 sterling. To guarantee repayment, the company takes a mortgage on the property of the settler, and the settler pays 6 per cent. a year interest on the loan. Among the advantages that this system offers, one may be mentioned: that of uniting, for the pursuit of a common aim, resources and energies that would otherwise be frittered away, perhaps, in isolated efforts, for lack of sufficient means. Indeed, the proverbial strength of unity is perhaps more conspicuous in agriculture than in any other industry.

Under wise direction, the spirit of association fruitfully stimulates the ambition of settlers, enlarges their field of operation, and it is to be hoped that these colonization societies will multiply to the advantage of the North-West. Their constitutions may vary according to the end in view, but, when conducted with prudence, they form a fine class of farmers, while at the same time they afford a profitable investment to the originators.

Two important centres of population that we pass during the night are Broadview and Indian Head. It is at the latter place that the line crosses the famous Bell

Farm—an enterprise of colossal proportions, being a hundred miles square, and a veritable factory of wheat on a grand scale. The administration is carried on with military order and precision. The extent of the wheat fields is proportionate to that of the farm. The furrows are sometimes miles in length, and to trace two of them is considered a day's work, after which a man may sleep with a good conscience. The small farmer of the Old World who patiently and laboriously ploughs his modest parcel of ground, urging before him his yoke of oxen, would scarcely recover from the shock if, by some magic, he were transported to one of these grand wheat fields of the North-West. If he got over his surprise, he would not care to retrace his steps and resume his old-fashioned ways. What would be his astonishment on seeing the long line of ploughs, reaping and mowing machines, with their drivers seated comfortably in front, attacking fields of two or three square kilometres? Perhaps it would come home to him, in presence of that wondrously organized industry, how it was that he had been at such dreadful pains to struggle against the rivalry, in his own markets, of new-world producers.

Qu'Appelle is destined to play an important rôle in the colonization of the North-west. Its development has been rapid. The town is the headquarters of one of the most fertile regions in Assiniboia—the valley that bears its name. This valley runs from west to east in a

direction almost parallel with the Canadian Pacific Railway and its fertility depends on its topographical conformation. Deeply entrenched in the prairie and protected from the north and south winds by high banks, its climate is relatively mild. The plowing, sowing, harvesting are respectively a fortnight earlier than in the other parts of the West. Stock-raising, especially sheep-rearing, is in great favor with the farmers—the animals remaining on the pastures the greater portion of the winter.

A like conformation, only less marked, prevails in the other valleys of the North-West. They are for the most part ravines on a gigantic scale, dried-up beds of once mighty rivers, the bottoms of which have become land of amazing fertility. Between Qu'Appelle and Regina, the face of the prairie changes, rising gradually. The line, making long circuits, ascends the first slope of the Missouri table-land, the heights of which show themselves indistinctly on the horizon to the right. Ere long the train enters a level plain, that immense plateau stretching westward to the Dirt Hills, in the midst of which is situated the capital of the Territories, Regina—a not unhandsome city built of wood, the official home of the Governor.

On the platform of the Regina station are grouped a few Indians. Crouching on their heels, wrapped in their long woollen blankets, which they draw close over their chests to ward off the cold, they solicit the passengers to purchase little objects of their own workmanship. There is nothing to inspire terror in these somewhat

degenerate descendants of BlackBird and Hawke's Eye. One of them, who wears blue spectacles, walks alongside the train holding in his hand a pair of buffalo horns mounted with some originality and which he is anxious to dispose of. He does not seem very robust and totters as he walks. He goes from group to group without uttering a syllable, merely holding out the object that he has to sell. Though he does not succeed, his failure does not seem to trouble him. From the bottom of my heart I pitied this unfortunate and in him his whole ill-fated race. God made the Indian master of the plains of the New World: colonization has come to dispossess him of his rights. Did he revolt against the invaders of his country? In the name of civilization he was massacred, as in the south. Did he claim his property from the avarice of the trader? He was throttled with fire-water so as to bring him the more easily to conviction! In a word, this civilization, mother of all kinds of progress, had for centuries but one object in certain portions of America, to wipe out from the face of the earth the first possessors of the soil by annihilating them physically and morally.

In Canada the case has been different, as I have already pointed out, and Religion has raised its voice of pity on behalf of the Indians, and has on the one hand, succeeded in calming their minds, and, on the other, in promoting, with the aid of the Government, their well-being and education.

The first step taken by the Government to raise the moral statue of the Indians was to place them under

the control of special agents charged with their supervision. These agents, assisted by the missionaries, have endeavored to awaken in their minds some elementary notions of civilization. After having set apart the reserves on which they were to reside, the government made provision for their subsistence by distributing among them at regular intervals, rations of food. Their immediate wants being thus supplied, they were gradually accustomed, in spite of themselves, to a settled mode of living.

The task of the agents was difficult and ungrateful. On some occasions it called for all their energy to restrain within the limits assigned to them those turbulent children of the prairie, long accustomed to reign, as masters, over those vast solitudes. For several years, kept by main force on the reserves, they passed their time in idleness, hunting little and depending wholly for maintenance on the rations furnished by the Government. Then at last a reaction set in and the fever of unrest began to subside. The moment for submission had arrived—the moment for which the Government had been waiting to put to the test a project which aimed at nothing less than the complete transformation of the conditions in which the Indians had hitherto lived. This plan was to convert the ancient prairie-rangers into farmers and thus to make them share in the development of the country. Inspectors were appointed to teach them the rudiments of agriculture, while at the same time implements of husbandry, seed grains and animals were distributed among them. The early essays were full of

difficulty, laziness, ignorance and above all, superstition, having to be first subdued. But statistics justify the government's policy. In 1881, the 20,900 Indians scattered through Manitoba and the Territories cultivated hardly 3,000 acres of land; they possessed about 5,000 head of cattle and employed about 12,000 agricultural implements of all kinds. In 1889, in the same regions, the Indian population had risen to 24,522 souls. It had cultivated 12,007 acres of land, possessed a little more than 13,000 animals and employed 33,516 agricultural implements. Again in 1890, at the annual exhibition of the Agricultural Society of Assiniboia, the first prize for the cultivation of wheat was awarded to an Indian of the Crooked Lake reserve.

The Government is not only desirous to improve the material condition of the Indians, but has also endeavored to raise their moral level by developing their intellectual faculties. Elementary and industrial schools have been opened at various points in the Territories, and these training establishments have been entrusted to the missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, of the country. Reading, writing and arithmetic are taught at these schools, and the boys are also apprenticed to different trades, and thus put in the way of earning their own living. At the start, the Indians manifested characteristic repugnance to this discipline, and many of them refused to send their children, but ultimately good sense triumphed over traditional prejudice. To-day these schools are attended by numerous pupils, and some of them become skilful artisans. In 1881, in the North-

West Territories and Manitoba, 971 children were on the roll. In 1887 the number had risen to 2,687, and in 1890 to 3,268. Thus, instead of trying to exterminate the native race, the Canadian Government has done all in its power to preserve the Indians and to better their condition. It has placed within their reach all the resources of civilization, instead of using these resources to destroy them. The excellence of the methods employed for their improvement has, moreover, been amply justified by results, and the future, there is reason to hope, will show still grander fruits of a humane policy which does the utmost credit to the people and the Government of Canada.

Regina is the starting-point of the branch line that helps to colonize the fertile regions watered by the great Saskatchewan. Of this region the resources are many and manifold, but different in some particulars from those of the prairie-land through which we have just been passing. The Saskatchewan district is wood-land abundantly provided with water, and its climate is, for the most part, milder than that of the other portions of the North-West, with the exception of Alberta. While Winnipeg, for example, has an average winter temperature of two degrees above zero, at Battleford, on the Saskatchewan, the average during the months of January, February and March is 12 degrees above zero. From the configuration of the country, the nature of the soil, the great richness of its natural meadows, it is eminently adapted to mixed farming. Immigrants of small means would do well to turn their steps in this direction.

In consequence of the comparatively recent opening up of the country, they would have a wider choice in fixing upon their homesteads, while the abundance of wood for building would diminish, in a large measure, the first necessary outlays.

The chief town of the district is Prince Albert, a small town situated on the north branch of the Saskatchewan. The colonization is developing rapidly. The population of the region is in a great part composed of half-breeds and French-Canadians. The river Saskatchewan is open to navigation through nearly its whole course. There is a regular service of small steamboats, which bring all the settlements spread over an extent of more than 800 miles into easy communication.

I had occasion to point out with what rapidity the Canadian Pacific Company had urged on the work of building its line to the north of Lake Superior. On the prairie, between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains, it was no less expeditious. The following statistics will help to explain the rapid development of Manitoba and the North-West, besides being of interest as part of the story of a great enterprise of imperial importance :

On this portion of the line, the company had to construct 962 miles of road. In 1881 it completed 165 miles; in 1882, 419; in 1883, 376. In 1882, 134 miles were completed in 42 days. The work at this time was being prosecuted at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles a day. In 1883 this rate was surpassed. In the course of the year the workmen in 48 days completed 166 miles of road—the average being $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles *per diem*.

During the whole period of construction, the men charged with laying the rails kept up with those who built the road. Every heart was inspired by the same energy; everyone connected with the enterprise was eager to see it brought to a successful conclusion. The directors of the line mingled with the workmen and thus stimulated their zeal. Nor did the rapidity affect the solidity of the work. From first to last the line was built in such a way as to merit the praise of all the engineers of both hemispheres who had an opportunity of inspecting it. In the task of embankment an average of 16,300 cubic meters of earth per mile was employed. These embankments, which could, at need, be dispensed with through the whole course of the prairie, were adopted for the sole object of avoiding the snow-drifts in winter and of doing as much as possible without trenches, which would have become veritable reservoirs for the snow to accumulate and block the trains. The plan also gave the road a minimum of gradient—the mean inclination of the line from Winnipeg to the mountains being about forty feet to the mile or 1 foot for every 132 feet.

To have an exact notion of the marvellous rapidity with which all these works were pushed on, it must be borne in mind that they were conducted in the midst of an absolute wilderness, and that every passing day carried the workmen farther from civilization and all that it meant for them. Nevertheless, so well provided was the commissariat that during their three years of service, the workmen were not for a single day deprived of anything necessary for their subsistence or comfort.

At distances of 130 miles, stores, shelters for locomotives, shunting tracks for trains, repair shops, coal depots and reservoirs of water were stationed, and the telegraph was always in advance of the workmen. Just as a section of 100 miles was completed, all this material, apparatus and supplies were despatched forward. The workmen's dwellings were in compartments and could be taken asunder. At the first signal they were taken down, laden on numbered wagons, and, in a single day were set up again at a fresh stage 100 miles further on.

The plateau of Regina has the reputation of being arid and unfit for culture. But this is really a mistaken notion which it is only fair, in the interest of the country, to dispel. The aridity of the plain is only apparent, for in whatever locality the plough pierces the superficial crust and turns it over and exposes the lower strata of the soil, the earth presents ample evidence of the utmost fertility. In fact it is eminently suitable for the raising of cereals, and especially of wheat.

This plateau is a favorite resort of sportsmen. We pass near numerous lakes around which game is found in abundance. On the shores water-hens, ducks, wild geese, pelicans, plovers, are gambolling in myriads, all these winged creatures seeming to live in perfect intimacy. From time to time an antelope passes within range of vision, stops a moment and casts toward the train a look of alarm. A few coyotés, scared by our passage, steal away among the high grass and are lost to view in the nearest coulée. As a sail on the horizon

brings on deck all the passengers of a steamship, so on the prairie, the sight of the smallest living thing suffices to awaken the curiosity of those who are rushing at full speed through the solitude of the West.

The present delimitation of the provinces or districts of the Canadian North-West is entirely conventional, and in a future reasonably near, a more rational subdivision, in harmony with topography, climate and nature's own dividing lines, may be reasonably looked for. For nature has not only intended this part of Canada to be the first agricultural country in the world, but has also partitioned it into regions where distinct communities may find homes according to their needs. Such a readjustment might include the eastern portion of Assiniboia in Manitoba and the western in Alberta, while its northern part would go to Saskatchewan and thus form a province clearly distinct from the other districts by climate and physical characters. Thus reconstituted, Manitoba would become the wheat granary of the world, while Alberta would be the chosen home of the stock-raisers. The Saskatchewan valleys, with their incalculable forest wealth, their mighty force of water-power, their deposits of coal, of gold and other minerals, would be among the most prosperous industrial centres of North America. At later stages of the development, other regions further north would be organized into provinces, the abodes of hardy settlers of generations yet to come.

A century, perhaps, will have passed away before the peopling of these immense regions is an accomplished

fact. During half that period the product of the soil will exceed the wants of the inhabitants for local consumption. From day to day the means of communication will become more numerous over the whole vast extent of territory, the means of transport more rapid, more direct and at the same time more economical. The surplus of production will be despatched to the European markets, in spite of theories and plans. For no human law can prevent the economic transformation that is in process of taking place, and of this transformation no one can to-day foresee the consequences. The soil of the Old World being exhausted, the generation now growing up there will, in defiance of all artificial restrictions, come and take possession of the rich new lands that await them on this side of the Atlantic. There lies the salvation of a considerable portion of the peasantry of Europe. Ruined by competition, by the sterility of their worn-out lands and by the depreciation of values, Providence offers them half a continent of incomparable fertility; and the social question will be in a large part solved the moment these classes, with their penates, come to plant new roots of humanity in the great plains of free Canada. Then will disappear the hatreds born of rivalry and the misery due to lack of the means of subsistence.

There are, it is true, certain governments that endeavor to repress the movement of emigration in their respective countries, while, notwithstanding, their legislators are helpless to provide bread for the needy multitude. Their attempts, like new Pharaohs, to prevent a

divinely appointed exodus will be overcome by a wisdom superior to their own. For it is really impossible not to see the hand of Providence in this timely opening-up of new fields of fruitful activity just when the social question is assuming grave and alarming phases even in states of recognized stability.

The vast plain that stretches out from the western slope of the Missouri plateau to the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains, and which is crossed by the Canadian Pacific Railway, is one of the richest stock-raising regions in North America. This plain encloses the southwestern part of Assiniboia and the southern part of Alberta. It has an area of 65,000 square miles. Numerous rivers water it, such as the Saskatchewan, the Bow, the Belly, etc., and a multitude of secondary waterways that take their rise in the Cypress Hills or in the numberless gorges of the Rocky Mountains furrow it in every direction. Over its whole extent the prairie is covered by a peculiar grass, which constitutes its special wealth. The inhabitants call it buffalo grass. Timber is found in abundance along the water-courses, and the sub soil contains rich deposits of coal, which will become in future years one of the country's most important sources of wealth. In the midst of these natural meadows wander from year to year countless herds of horses, cattle and sheep, to which nature supplies abundant and substantial fodder, of the reproduction of which it also assumes the responsibility. The climate on this vast prairie-land is temperate. At Medicine Hat, Calgary and MeLeod, the three most important centres of

population in this great district, the mean temperature in January, February and March is, respectively, 13, 12 and 21 degrees above zero, Fahrenheit. The snowfall rarely exceeds a height of eight inches. This relative mildness of the climate is due to the beneficent action of a wind known under the name of chinook—a warm breeze that rises at certain periods of the year on the coasts of the Pacific, crosses the Rocky Mountains and sweeps the prairies of Alberta and Western Assiniboia. In a few days, sometimes in a few hours, under its influence the snow disappears, the temperature modifies and the thermometer rises several degrees.

Before the opening of the Canadian Pacific, the whole western portion of the Dominion through which we have been passing was closed to civilization and progress. Only the Indians, a few fur-traders and the missionaries crossed its vast solitudes. Even as late as ten years ago the shortest route to these regions was through the United States. Travellers bound for the western prairies, who shrank from a long canoe voyage by the great lakes, betook themselves by railway to Bismarck, in the State of Dakota, there got aboard a steamer and ascended the upper Missouri to Fort Benton. From that fort they continued their journey across the prairie by caravan. At present in four days one may travel from Montreal to Calgary.

The view that is unfolded on the left side of the cars between Swift Current and Medicine Hat soon makes one forget the seeming aridity of the Regina plateau. In the distance, towards the south, the Cypress Hills

display their sombre mass against the clear blue of the sky. One can easily distinguish their deep gorges and the beautiful pine forests that cover their northern slope. Between the base of these mountains and the line of the railway extend rich pasture lands, in which at intervals appear numerous herds of horses, around which may be seen galloping men attired in "cowboy" guise, mounted on native ponies. Sometimes the train passes through countless flocks of sheep, in no wise dismayed by the noise of the speeding train. At intervals we have a glimpse of a cluster of farm-houses surrounded by trees—farms which prove, what is generally ignored, that the west of Assiniboia is as favorable to wheat-growing as to cattle-raising. Settlers of modest means prefer Manitoba and the valleys east of the Missouri *côteau*, but this is mainly because western Assiniboia is not so well known as it ought to be, and perhaps because hitherto stock-raising has been the chief industry, and thus an impression has gained ground that it was not adapted for cereals or mixed farming. But this misconception will correct itself in time.

The entire region lying between the Missouri *côteau* to the east and the Rocky Mountains to the west, the American frontier to the south and the Athabasca to the north, contains the richest carboniferous deposits in North America. Here again nature has favored Canada by placing within her reach an element of wealth which she has denied to the Western States of the Union. It is estimated that the extent of this coal-bearing region is not less than 65,000 square miles, and the quantity of

accessible coal is calculated to be 6,000,000 tons per square mile. The extraction of this coal is everywhere comparatively easy, the vein not being deep, and its inclination with the surface of the soil not exceeding an angle of ten degrees. The thickness of the different strata varies from six inches to twenty-five feet. Those that are being worked are from four to twelve feet thick. The quality of the coal is variable. In the west of Assiniboia, in the vicinity of Medicine Hat and in the upper valley of the Deer river, lignite is found in great abundance. In the neighborhood of Lethbridge and Calgary, as well as in the Edmonton district, the beds are formed of bituminous coal. Near the Rocky Mountains, on the other hand, the coal is pure anthracite. Numerous companies have been formed to utilize this new source of wealth. The two most important of these companies have their seat of operations, the one at Lethbridge, in Alberta, the other at Anthracite, on the slope of the Rocky Mountains. Besides, wherever a natural opening in the ground has exposed the mineral, the settlers work it for their own benefit. At Edmonton, for instance, of which we shall have occasion to speak again by-and-by, the inhabitants make use of the coal, which they collect themselves by means of shafts made for this purpose, some of them under the town itself. It is almost needless to say that the Canadian Pacific Company turns to account whatever deposits of coal nature has placed in its way, and the saving thus effected is considerable. Not one of the great United States railway lines has a like advantage. Every one of them has,

at great cost in time, material and money, to establish all along its course numerous centres of coal and water supply for the service of its trains.

In some parts of the North-West natural gas issues forth in abundance. At Langevin station the Company has for several years used it for lighting and as the motor of a machine for raising water to the reservoirs. The application of this gas to the needs of industry is only a question of time. What doubt can there be as to the future of a country where nature seems to have accumulated all the sources of wealth which elsewhere she only places piecemeal at the disposal of mankind! Under the action of an admirable climate, the earth brings forth a hundred-fold. Nature herself takes charge of the cattle that stray at will over her prairies. Underneath, the soil is everywhere a store of natural richness. Millions of persons in this generation and in ages to come will draw thence the fuel necessary not only for their own use, but for the operation of all the industries that they may establish. In contrast with the state of things in the Western States of the Union, where the greater portion of the soil is covered with deserts of sand, there is not a corner in the whole of the Canadian North-West which cannot be utilized by agriculture or other form of industry.

Yet, this Land of Promise is still, as to population, virtually unoccupied, and all the phases of various wealth, of which, *currents calamo*, I have attempted to outline the value, are placed within reach of the bold, steady, industrious settler.

III.

We reach Calgary about two o'clock in the morning. The night is clear. On the horizon the sombre mass of the Rocky Mountains stands out in bold relief against the deep blue background of a sky brilliant with stars. The "Alberta" is a fine hotel of cut stone which would not suffer in comparison with the best hotels of eastern cities. Like all the city it is lighted by electricity. Just as I enter it, an alarm of fire is sounded and in less than two minutes the firemen pass before me, their horses at the gallop. These fine buildings all around me, this electric light, this steam fire-engine of which I catch a glimpse, all carry me back in imagination to the obscure trading-post of a few years ago. Only yesterday it seems, for indeed the city only dates from 1882. In 1885 when I visited it for the first time it was still in truth only a village with a few dozens of wooden houses, an hotel of like material, and the Indians' camps scarcely distinguishable from it. To-day it has a population of over 4,000 souls, and the value of real estate is estimated at 15,000,000 francs, while its annual trade exceeds twelve millions.

The city rises on the banks of the Bow river, which has its source in the Rocky Mountains, is both broad and deep, and waters the most fertile portions of Alberta. Its ample water-power will make of Calgary before many years an important industrial centre. The situation of the city is exceptional. Surrounded by circular hills which guard it from the violent north and south winds, it suffers from extremes of temperature neither

in summer nor in winter. During the months of July and August, the mean temperature is 55 degrees Fahr., whilst at Fort McLeod or Medicine Hat this mean rises to 62 degrees.

Five years ago Calgary had only two small counting houses. To-day the greatest banks of Canada are represented by branches. When I asked the manager of the Bank of Montreal his impression as to the future prosperity of the town, he replied with a smile, that when he came there, he was able unaided to attend to the business of the bank, but that now he was assisted by five clerks. "Can I say more," he added, "as to the increase which our business has undergone?" The president of the Calgary Board of Trade also gave me some interesting information. The price of land in the city and its environs increases in proportion to the development of the country and without respect to the spirit of speculation. These rates range from \$75 to \$175 per acre within the limits of Calgary. Within a radius of four miles around the young city one may procure land at the rate of from \$20 to \$50 an acre with a river front. The price of land offered for sale by the Canadian Pacific Company varies from \$3 to \$6 per acre. Nature has spared nothing in facilitating the development of Calgary. The town is in the centre of a rich carboniferous district and in its neighborhood important stone quarries are being worked. Every spring the waters of the Bow deposit at the doors of the city immense quantities of building timber from the lofty woodland of the Rocky Mountains entrusted to the current and thus

transported to the sawmills. The land in the environs of Calgary is remarkably fertile and the market gardens, the products of which are ever in demand in the city have been remarkably successful.

"We have no poor in our city," said the mayor to me, and the statement might be applied to the whole North-West. "Everyone who comes here in robust health and with a fair stock of good-will can find work from day to day at all seasons of the year. With economy he may in two or three years create for himself an independent position." The average of wages at Calgary is two dollars a day. On this pay a steady worker, while living comfortably enough may lay aside a dollar at the end of each of his working days. The newly arrived immigrant must not restrict his energies to any one class of work. He must not say, I will be a gardener, or a joiner, or a mason, etc., but must simply accept with good will whatever work is offered him, whether it is in exact accord with his tastes or not. The opportunity will in time present itself of finding a better place, if he is intelligent, saving and sober. In the West the workman soon gets to be known, and, then while he is not dreaming of it, he is observed and studied by men who need help, and who, if he is deserving, will soon ascertain it and make him advantageous offers. The field of business in the West is a neutral ground on which men of social conditions apparently the most opposite may elbow each other. Here the younger son of an English peer may become the partner of a humble plebeian whom the contact with aristocracy neither surprises nor frightens.

The great law of the struggle for life levels all distinctions of origin, and those who refuse to bow the head before this law condemn themselves to helplessness when they do not expose themselves to ridicule. The first condition of success is to leave far behind the spirit of caste and to attain the conviction that work alone and its fruits will be the umpires of merit and consideration. This equality joined with the principle of fair play innate in every true-born Briton, has one result which every impartial traveller must acknowledge: it shuts the door against mean jealousies which in many communities, oppose an impassable barrier to progress. Wherever I went in the North-West, I never once found rivalries or hatreds existing between settlers or merchants. Everyone tries to do better than his neighbor, to surpass him if he can, but rarely does this competition transgress the bounds of courtesy and justice.

Calgary, which is now the commercial centre of all Alberta, will ere long be the general *entrepôt* for the traffic of the Territories with the Pacific coast. Its distance from Winnipeg is 840 miles, from Vancouver 642 miles. The town is also the terminus of two important railways—that of Edmonton, in the north, which draws towards the Canadian Pacific all the trade of a region of more than 60,000 square miles, and that of McLeod, which traverses the rich highlands in the south of Alberta.

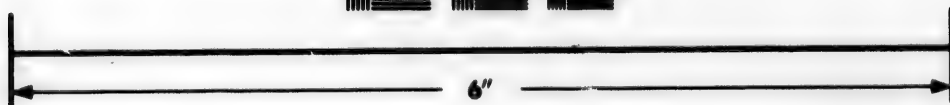
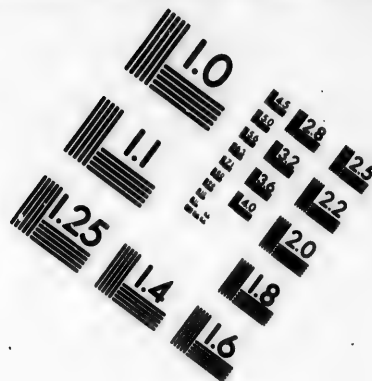
The relations that exist, through the Canadian Pacific Railway, between the different provinces of the Dominion, justify the foresight of the Fathers of Confederation.

tion. They laid the foundation of a prosperity, which it is the task of Canadian industry to favor. The development of Canada, with the manifold resources comprised in its vast territory, will be sufficient for herself on the day when European immigration is convinced that nowhere else can it find a field of labor more productive, and when the great manufacturers of Eastern Canada understand what advantage it would be to them to extend their radius of action from ocean to ocean. Everywhere, indeed, from Winnipeg to Vancouver, I became aware of the earnest desire of the local municipalities to see the development of new industries in their respective centres. There exists, I know, in certain quarters, a strong prejudice against the protectionist policy adopted by the federal Government in 1878, on the ground that it favored certain privileged industries at the expense of the general interest and of that of the agricultural class especially. In the United States with 65,000,000 inhabitants, protection has been a source of enterprise, industrial energy and wealth, and those who compare the régime that preceded with that which followed 1878, must, if they answer honestly and without bias, concede that it has also benefited Canada. A great country without manufactures is doomed to certain decay. But a country like Canada, consisting in part of long settled provinces, and in part of new, recently organized territories, requires a wise distribution of industrial enterprise in order to equalize its advantages. For instance, certain articles of common consumption are dear in the North-West, such

as garments, boots and agricultural implements, for the simple reason that the retail merchant has to pay not only the manufacturer in the eastern provinces, but the cost of transport, etc. This would be remedied by the great manufacturers establishing branch factories for the supply of places along the line of settlement westward and northwards—a course which would add to their own profits, while benefiting the settler. Wool, leather, wood, coal, iron are found in abundance all over the North-West. There is a wealth of excellent water-power, and all the young and rising cities offer special privileges and exemptions to the manufacturers who throw in their lot with them. The growth of the population promises sure outlets for the native fabrics. Yet strange to say, few have as yet made the venture and manufactories are few and far between beyond Lake Superior. It is to these timid manufacturers that the agricultural classes of the prairies owe the grudge which they mistakenly pay out to the protectionist policy.

I am well aware that I will be told in reply that it is capital that is lacking, and that, besides, the creation of new industries would necessitate the presence of competent foreign workmen who would be unwelcome to the working population of Canada. I will reply further on to the first of these objections. As for the second, I will content myself by remarking that a young country like Canada, ambitious to attain to the summits of progress, cannot suffer any injury by appealing to all kinds of intelligence. A government anxious, as is that of the





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Dominion, to promote the public weal in this matter, should take an energetic stand, even though, for the greater good of the entire country, it should wound, for the moment, the susceptibilities of a feeble minority.

To return to Calgary, the physiognomy of the city does not lack originality. On all sides the activity is pervading and constant. In the streets there is an unceasing movement to and fro. Every one is wrapped up in his own business and meddles little with that of others. There are no loafers even in the hall of the "Alberta." I have visited some of the finer stores, especially that of the Hudsons' Bay Company. All are well supplied with all kinds of goods, and, a detail not without significance, they are mainly lighted by electricity. In the streets I encountered a large number of ranchmen. Their dark mahogany complexions, due to a prolonged out-door life on the prairie, the broad felt hats, the long boots—these alone indicate their occupation. They have nothing of that slovenliness which some of the Eastern papers attribute to them. Sometimes a few Indians mounted on ponies made their appearance. Wrapped in their many colored blankets, with carabine slung across the saddle, they pass along, calm in the midst of the crowd. They belong to the powerful nation of the Blackfeet, formerly absolute masters of this region. Their reserve is about twenty miles to the south of Calgary. There, under the vigilant supervision of special agents, they allow themselves to be initiated gradually into the beneficent methods of civilization. There are in Calgary two public

schools one of which is a noble structure in the centre of the town.

The Catholic missions directed by a holy and distinguished Oblat priest, Father Lacombe, have charge of the instruction of Indian and half-breed children. It would require a volume to do justice to the work of Father Lacombe and his associates in this portion of the great West—a work of self-denial, charity and civilization. Father Lacombe and his illustrious chief pastor, Archbishop Taché, have been the two apostles of the country. More than once they have both been all but martyred in the service of the sacred cause which they defended. The name of Father Lacombe is a symbol of peace in the most of the Indian tribes. His influence has not only profited Christianity, but has also potently aided the federal Government in establishing in the North-West the mild and merciful sway that it has exercised for over forty years. The name of this humble servant of God is not only venerated in the scenes of his labors, but is known and honored in the highest circles of the East. Touching, indeed, and not without great lessons was the spectacle of the most powerful dignitaries of the state, the "magnates" of the Canadian Pacific—and these Protestants—inviting to their table, on the most special occasions, and offering him the place of honor, this humble missionary, who has grown grey in the service of God and of civilization. In the delightful little book of the Countess of Aberdeen, "Through Canada with a Kodak," mention is made of Father Lacombe, as one of the guests gathered around the

hospitable board of Sir Donald A. Smith, when that munificent Nor-Wester entertained our present Governor-General and His Excellency's gracious and gifted consort. Nor has the "Kodak" forgotten to capture the missionary's impressive features.

The line of the Canadian Pacific delimits with considerable accuracy the two great regions of Alberta. To the south down to the United States frontier and to the lofty chain of the Rockies on the west, stretch out the richest pasture lands in America. Northwards, an elevated track, cut into deep valleys, bounteously watered, well wooded, and having a soil of incomparable activity, offers for mixed farming an exhaustless field of operations. As to climate, these two regions enjoy almost identical advantages. The town of McLeod is the centre of the Southern district; Edmonton, on the Upper Saskatchewan, is the metropolis of the North. The mean temperatures summer and winter at McLeod are respectively from 62 to 21 degrees Fahrenheit. At Edmonton, these means are 55 and 11 degrees respectively. As in the Province of Manitoba and all Assiniboia, the atmosphere in Alberta is dry and of a limpidity unknown to the older provinces. The vicinity of the mountains makes it the healthiest country on the American continent. It imparts a renewal of vigor to all who plant their tent there. A disciple of Æsculapius told the writer that it took the physician's place to a large extent and was often a surer healer than the man of drugs.

Ten years ago the prairie of Alberta belonged to the

Indians, the traders and a few herds of buffalos that as yet had escaped massacre. To-day there are more than a hundred ranches scattered through its whole extent, without counting the numerous farms that dot the banks of the water-courses so abundant in this country. More than 35,000 horses, 12,000 milch cows, 40,000 oxen, 60,000 sheep, roam at liberty all the year through. In the plains of Assiniboia, it may be added, which were alike closed to progress ten years ago, the number of horses and cattle respectively was estimated last year at 22,000 and 63,000 head. This alone is an answer to those who pretend that the North-West is stationary.

To a Scotchman, Dr. McEachran, and a Canadian, Senator Cochrane, is due the honor, I had almost said the glory, of having started the stock-raising industry in the plains of Alberta. Towards 1881, when the construction of the Canadian Pacific had been definitely undertaken, these gentlemen, accompanied by a few friends, set out for the North-West. After having ascended, in a steamboat, the Missouri River as far as Fort Benton, they began to cross the prairie on horse-back. In three weeks after leaving Montreal, they arrived at Fort McLeod, the centre of fat pastures, which their intelligence and energy were soon to transform into a great natural park for stock-raising.

Under this timely impulse the ranching industry rapidly developed. English and Canadian capitalists chose lands suitable for their stock, imported largely from Montana, while United States cattle-men quickly recognized that Alberta was destined to become the

most important centre for the production of low-priced meat, and, in order to share in its advantages, began to send their cattle northwards. The Federal Government did not give them leave and in that it did right. In noticing, *en passant*, this movement from the Western States into the Canadian North-West, it may suffice, by way of showing their bad faith, to mention how for political ends, they paint in falsest colors the Dominion in general, and in particular the new regions opened up to colonization.

The completion in 1885 of the Canadian Pacific Railway gave a fresh impetus to the development of the stock-raising industry. Not only did the herds increase in number but the type of the animals improved. Bulls of Durham breed were imported at great expense from England, and thus judicious crossing was introduced into the ranches. At first horned cattle monopolized attention, but it was seen before very long that no slight profit lay in horse-breeding as well. Horse ranches were established and have been all along successful. Great English land-owners sent out valuable stallions and a considerable number of mares, and to day all the best known British breeds are well represented in the country, and the native animals sprung from the imported sires, show to excellent advantage, the climate imparting to them a vigor even greater than that of the ancestral animals. The horse has been found more easy to naturalize than the bovine race. When in seasons of rare severity, mortality invades the herds, the horses suffer less than the kine, the losses standing, on an average,

at 5 per cent for the latter when they are only 2 per cent for the former.

The Edmonton district comprises all the north of Alberta, extending from the Canadian Pacific to Athabasca on the north. It has an area of about 50,000 square miles, and in this area nature has united all the elements of wealth that are likely to attract immigration. The latter is not holding back indeed, for during the last three years, close columns of settlers have been advancing to take possession of these territories. The aspect of the Edmonton district differs from that of which the town of McLeod is the centre. Furrowed in all directions by broad and deep rivers, amply wooded, largely undulating, the country offers to the traveller an unbroken succession of fresh landscapes that are restful to the eyes after the monotony of the great plains that we have lately traversed.

The two great essentials of wood and water abound everywhere in this region. To the north the valleys watered by the Athabasca, the McLeod, and the Pembina are covered by deep forests of pine, balsams and poplars, which grow to a considerable size and furnish building timber of excellent quality. On the banks of the Saskatchewan, and to the south, in the valleys of its tributaries, the Battle and the Deer, wood is not so plentiful. But ten generations of settlers will not exhaust the forest reserves of this part of the country.

The climate of the Edmonton district reminds one of that of the elevated valleys of Switzerland, nor does the resemblance between the two countries end at this point.

In the valleys of the Saskatchewan, the Deer and the Battle Rivers, the snow disappears generally at the end of March or middle of April, the melting of it going on rapidly and the soil drying with equal rapidity. Until about the 15th of May the nights are cool, sometimes even cold, but, by way of compensation, the days are warm, and under the influence of the sun's rays the thaw proceeds apace. Vegetation begins to show in the last week of April, and in the latter days of May it is flourishing. During the month of June, which is generally rainy, and of July the growth of all green things is amazing. Crops sown from the 25th of April to the 15th of May are ripe in the middle of August. After the 15th of September hoar-frosts are occasionally seen, though the meadows preserve their verdure to the middle of November, when the first snow-falls are registered. Although for a day or two the thermometer may fall at Edmonton to 40 degrees below zero, the winter on the whole is less rigorous than in Manitoba. Snow-storms, frequent in the East, are unknown north of Calgary. This comparative mildness is due to the beneficent action of the chinook winds already mentioned, as well as to the forests which serve as wind-breaks. The mean depth of winter snow is about 18 inches, sometimes less. In 1886 it did not exceed six inches.

With the exception of milch cows, the animals are allowed to remain out-doors all winter. During the night they find shelter in the sheds, while in day-time they find abundant fodder by scratching away the snow. The soil of the Edmonton district is a rich black loam,

with sub-soil of clay. The cultivable land has an average depth of three feet, and it is noteworthy that the rich black loam is thicker on the heights than in the valleys.

Most of the rivers or torrents that water the country take their rise in the Rocky Mountains. In their headlong course these streams carry with them in the spring the débris of silicious clay which tends gradually to take the place of the black loam, so that the lands bordering the rivers, though retaining their fertility, need the aid of fertilizers sooner than the highlands. Farmers in the Edmonton district unfortunately make the same mistake as those of Manitoba in neglecting their manure heaps, which lie in the farm-yards unused and well nigh forgotten. It is only now and then that a farmer applies a few barrows full to accelerate the growth of the vegetables in the garden attached to his house. This contempt of nature's fertilizing materials does honor assuredly to the fecundity of the soil, but it shows a culpable lack of foresight on the part of the farmers, who ought to know that there is no land, however productive, that does not, in the long run, become exhausted, and that in sparing themselves a little exertion, they are bequeathing to their children a tenfold labor in restoring to the soil its lost vitality. However that be, the soil, still in the acme of its vigor gives back a hundredfold the seeds that the farmer entrusts to it. There is no corner of Manitoba or Assiniboia, however favored by nature, that equals in fertility the valleys of the Deer, the Battle, and the north Saskatchewan rivers. The average return

per acre in the Edmonton district is for oats 52 minots, the minot weighing from 46 to 52 pounds. Barley yields from 45 to 55 minots, the weight of the minot weighing from 54 to 57 pounds. The yield per acre of wheat is more considerable than in Manitoba. The length of wheat stalks and oat stalks gives new evidence of the fertility of the soil. I have seen at Calgary stalks of wheat that measured six feet two inches in height and of which the heads attained a size of $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 inches.

The price of land in Edmonton is still merely nominal, if one takes into account its almost incredible fertility and the precious advantages which the country offers to the colonist, in the richness of the wood and water supply. Besides, here as all over the North-West the value of lands depends less on their fertility than on their less or greater distance from the railway. On this point I would hazard a remark: Those whose resources enable them to invest in land a considerable part of their disposable capital may indulge in this expensive choice of lands in the vicinity of railways. But those whose means are more modest would be wise to content themselves with those parts of the district that are not yet settled. They will thus become land-owners at a minimum outlay, and moreover, will not have long to wait till a railway is near their doors.

Hitherto the local market has been amply sufficient for disposing of the surplus products of the farm, a fact easily explained by the rapid growth of population every year. During the last lustrum, thousands of immigrants have come to pitch their tents in the Edmonton district.

These new settlers require seed grains, wheat for domestic use, hay for fodder, and of course, it is from the farms of their predecessors that they obtain their supplies. The surplus of the crops is always bought up on the spot by the traders who traverse the country every fall.

Edmonton, the administrative and commercial centre of the district, that bears the name, is situated on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River. Its history is that of all the other cities of the West. In the latter years of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company erected on its site a fort which became in a little time the headquarters of the fur-traders of the region. Soon not far from the fort, there rose a church, served by Catholic priests. The influence of these devoted apostles of civilization soon made itself felt among the aboriginal tribes, and counterbalanced, on the character of the Indians, those germs of demoralization which are always disseminated wherever the passion for gain, combined, as in too many instances, with blameworthy practices, takes possession of their minds. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway was the starting-point of Edmonton's fortune. The news spread that the promoters of the trans-continental line purposed bringing it through the Saskatchewan valley, and Edmonton became the destination of a crowd of speculators. The price of lands augmented rapidly; houses were built in all directions and soon a miniature city was founded on the banks of the Saskatchewan. But the engineers of the road having fixed upon a new pass in the Rocky Mountains, further south, it was decided that the line should

be by way of Calgary, instead of Edmonton, two hundred miles further north. This decision dispelled the dreams of the speculators and retarded the development of the young city for some years. The real friends of colonization have not, nevertheless, complained of the change. For, as I said before, the Edmonton district, being essentially adapted for immigrants of modest means, the settler finds there land at a trifling cost, with abundance of wood and water, whereas, had the railway passed that way, the district would have been overrun with speculators, who would have demanded exorbitant prices, which would have deterred the very class for which the country is best adapted. I have already referred to the disastrous results of speculation at Winnipeg. Not far from that city there is at this moment an expanse of 100,000 square miles, in the direction of Portage la Prairie, the soil of which is of marvellous fertility, and yet it remains unproductive, just because it is in the hands of speculators. Although 5,000 farmers could easily and prosperously live there, the region is held from *bonâ fide* purchasers by men who have thus deliberately obstructed the settlement and progress of the country for more than twenty years. Their action, moreover, tends to encourage in the minds of Europeans that false notion that the larger part of the great West is in the hands of financial agents, who will only sell at enormous profits. This system is a veritable plague, especially in new countries, the success of which depends on colonization, and it is the duty of governments to spare no constitutional exercise of authority to nullify its evil influence.

For two years Edmonton has been in regular communication with Calgary by a line of railway 200 miles long. Before the construction of this line, the immigrant spent six days in overcoming this distance. Now he can travel from Edmonton to Montreal or *vice versa* in the same period. Its situation on one of the most important of north-western rivers, its proximity to the great forests of the north, its vantage-ground in the centre of one of the richest coal-bearing districts in the world, assure Edmonton of a great future, as the metropolis of an agricultural and industrial region second to none on the continent.

To have a just idea of the progress achieved in the provinces of Western Canada in recent years it will be well to look back and see what their condition was over fifteen years ago.

On the eve of the accession to power of the Conservative party in 1878, the Confederation of the North American colonies was a little more than eleven years old. All the living forces, all the energies formerly scattered, without any bond of common interest, over a territory as large as that of Europe, had now rallied around a single flag, that of the Dominion, and still, notwithstanding the robust energy of its people and the good will of its political leaders, Canada was at this period, on the point of seeing its future irremediably compromised. An economic crisis of deep significance affected all parts of the country. The causes of this unhappy situation were manifold. One of them exceeded in gravity any of the others. Neither life nor progress

had as yet penetrated the solitude of the great West, to develop for the benefit of the whole community the incalculable wealth that nature had lavished on that part of the Dominion. To the east of the region of the great lakes, the old provinces of Canada, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, had the social, commercial and industrial movement of the Dominion all to themselves. Manitoba and the Territories of the North-West, more extensive than Russia in Europe, were separated from the sister provinces by a chain of lakes, as large as seas and by more than 600 miles of unexplored territory covered by seemingly boundless forests. From the western end of Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, over a stretch of some 1200 miles, in this same year 1878, there was but a single town at all worthy of the name, the city of Winnipeg, which had then a population of about 5,000 souls. Beyond Winnipeg and its little French-Canadian suburb of St. Boniface, the Canadian North-West was at that time almost a wilderness. The missionaries, the trappers in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, a few settlers here and there and the remnants of the once powerful Indian tribes, alone inhabited that great region.

All over this fertile prairie, in the midst of which we have just been visiting brilliant cities, with broad streets, lined by richly stocked stores, and lighted by electricity, we should in 1878 have found but the missionary's tent, the trappist's hut and the Indian's wigwam, those itinerant habitations which for more than two

centuries have traversed in company the great plains of North America. There as elsewhere, Faith has been the trusty mediatrix between charity on the one hand, and on the other, ignorance and barbarism. Beyond the Rocky Mountains, then as now, lay between its mountainous girdle and the breakers of the Pacific, that pearl of the Dominion, the Province of British Columbia, more than 2000 miles away from the Provinces of the East. The whole Dominion overflowed with natural wealth; the soil was of surprising fertility; the population was sprung from two of the most highly gifted and most enterprising races in the world, and still, notwithstanding all these advantages, the country was declining. The Confederation seemed to be dying of poverty of blood and consequent lack of vitality! In 1871 the Commons of Canada had, with one voice, voted for the construction of a Canadian transcontinental railway. The preliminary studies for this gigantic undertaking had been promptly begun, and then, all at once, the political horizon grew dark and overcast, the central power changed hands, the works of the transcontinental line almost stood still and this delay was destined to retard for ten years the entrance of the country upon the path of progress. Whether or not the government of the day lacked confidence in itself, certain it is that the financial markets of Europe lacked confidence in the means at its disposal. The result was that when in 1878 the Conservatives resumed control of affairs, the work of the railway had hardly made any progress. The situation was most critical; the work

accomplished in 1867 was threatened with ruin. The provinces of the East and those of the West were still without any direct means of communication with each other. The first settlers sent by the Central Government to Manitoba had to go by the United States; and a good many of them, seduced by the fallacious promises of American immigration agents, stopped on the way in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Dakota. This was a state of things that must, at all costs, be remedied. Only by repairing, without delay, the mistakes of the past could the threatened present be protected and the imperilled future be secured. Under penalty of seeing the great work of confederation undone, it was essential that all the energies, all the resources of the country should be concentrated on the completion of the trans-continental railway. It was necessary in fine (and the task was no easy one) to awaken again in the people the consciousness of its strength and to revive on the markets of Europe an assurance which would restore to Canada her forfeited credit. This heavy charge of responsibility the Government of 1878 did not shrink from assuming. Sir John Macdonald and his colleagues went resolutely to work from the very day of their advent to power to effect the economic resurrection of the country. Again adopting the Conservative programme of 1871 they assured the people that they would restore the country's prosperity. They appealed to all its patriotic, honorable and earnest men to aid them in their undertaking. The response was favorable. The people had confidence in them and they were able to keep their promise.

Inspired by the principles of an illustrious Canadian, their former colleague—"Canada pour les Canadiens et par les Canadiens"—they made this motto their own. On the first page of this programme was inscribed the Transcontinental Railway, and rightly, for on its construction depended the safety of the Federation. To postpone it would have been to set public opinion at defiance and to put themselves on the same footing of helplessness before the financiers of Europe on which their predecessors had stood. On the other hand, to undertake so gigantic an enterprise in the actual economic condition of Canada, seemed like a challenge to the fate of the party. But boldness, when combined with genius, has rarely failed, and Sir John Macdonald was not deceived in his plans and forecasts. The most critical duty that fell to his lot was to find men who would accept the colossal task and incur all the risks connected with it in exchange for reasonable compensation.

The new syndicate of the Canadian Pacific was composed of men of broad views and of exceptional energy and force of character. From their own treasury or that of powerful capitalists whom they associated with them they were able to bring large resources to the enterprise, and the well known patriotism of the chief partners was a guarantee of the integrity of their intentions. In the month of October, 1880, a contract was signed between the Canadian Government and the syndicate of the Canadian Pacific. In June, 1881, the workmen were apportioned their stations along 4000

kilometers of the projected line. On the 7th of November, 1885, the whole line was an accomplished fact. In the early days of June, 1886, the first passenger train left Montreal and crossed the continent. In the course of the same year, the company discharged towards the Dominion Government all the obligations which it had contracted. At the present moment the Canadian Pacific Company controls more than 6000 miles of railroad; it possesses on the Pacific Ocean a fleet of powerful steamships, and the different lines of its network radiate to all the principal points of the Western States. It would be impossible to exaggerate the breadth and elevation of view which have always characterized the relations between the Company of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the federal Government of Canada. No better revelation could be offered of the clear-sighted patriotism that should guide public men than the railway policy of the government of Sir John Macdonald and Sir John Abbott and Sir John Thompson during the last fifteen years. They foresaw the future reserved for their country and they devoted all the talent and energy with which heaven had endowed them to its preparation. They recognized that the line across the continent must be the keystone of the Canada of their dreams, and they shrank not from the responsibility of constructing it. This responsibility was enormous, but they assumed it with the determination either to conquer or to resign their positions and leave the government of the country to others. To-day when their work shines forth in all the splendour of its maturity, only political

fanatics of the worst type can doubt its utility. As for its results, it has been my privilege to endeavor to lay them before the impartial reader, and it is for him to judge of their range and character. If I have succeeded in helping others to form a fair estimate of their worth, my object in writing these notes will have been attained.

